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George Stokes, Esq.

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"The Parker Society,

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(Galatians vi. 14.)

Presented to the Library of R.T.S. by his daughter
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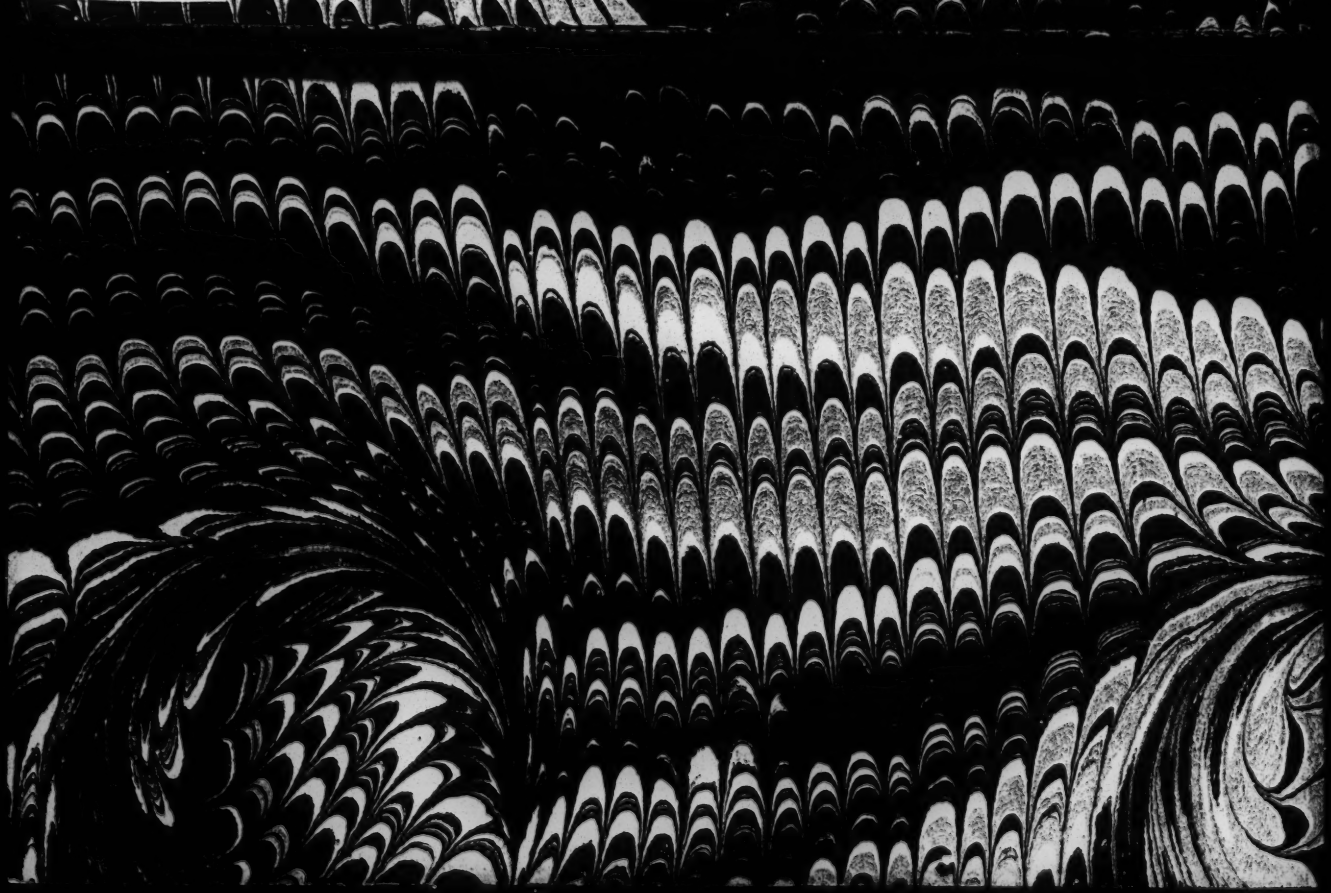

variant imprint

A

Briefe discourse of

certaine points of the reli-
gion, which is among the common
sort of Christians, which
may bee termed [illegible]
trie Diuinitie.

With a [illegible]
tations [illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible]
Diuine

Imprinted at Lon-
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] 1581.

To the Right honourable *his very good Lord, Ambrose* Earle of Warwick, Maister of her Ma*iesties Ordinance, Knight of the noble order of* the Garter, and one of her highnesse *most honourable priuie Councel, George* Gifford wisheth increase of al true happines & honour, with the con*uuall comfort of a good conscience.*

Nothing doubt (right honourable) but that it will seeme great arrogancy vnto some, and no small folly, to offer and present so simple and slender a booke as this is, vnto your Lordship: for what doth it seeme to bring with it worthie the person of a Noble man? There is no pompe in the matter of speech, for it is rude and country like, the matter it selfe is boorishly handled as a disputation betweene deepe diuines, but after the manner of plough men and [illegible]

tars: a great absurditie therefore appeareth in this, that an honourable person of great dignitie should be called for, as it were to stand by and hear such speak. Good cause there is therfore that I shold render som reason of this my boldenes, which I will willingly doe, to vse that which the heathen Poet saith:

Si canimus syluas, syluæ sunt consule dignæ.

Will not suffice: for although respecting the things which I handle, because they belong to the trees that are planted in the Lords Orchard, they doe as farre exceed the woods and groues, as the vine doth the bramble bush, yet neuertheless he hath so richly decked his base & beggerly matter, hee hath so clothed it in silkes from top to toe, and hath hanged so many iewels vpon it, that it shal finde entertainement, and be thought meete for the court of princes, whereas mine being very poorshe lad, will be reiected. I will expresse therfore a better reason of my doing, which is this. As those which haue some fields, think it not a

thing

thing vnmeete to be told by their seruãts of thistles & weedes which would hinder & mar the corn, if they prouide not to haue them plucked vp euẽ so I know that it is not an vnworthy thing to shew vnto those which are of highe calling, the hurtful & dangerous weedes which would ouergrow and choke the heauẽly seed of the gospel, sowen in the Lords field. When as our church therefore & common wealth, being the Lords husbandrie, is ouergrowne with weedes & almost laide waste, I seeto cause wherefore I may iustly be blamed, for giuing notice thereof in soe part vnto your honour. Seeing their principall causes and fountaines fro whẽce corruptiõs flow are to be taken away and doyed by those who God hath placed in the highest roomes among which the [illegible] a sincere ministerie of the word [illegible] greatest ought absolute [illegible] is a flood of ignorãce and darkenes [illegible] ucth flowing the most part of the [illegible] feare of God is banished from the [illegible]

rest parte: the woonderfull heapes and piles of sinne, which should bee washed and cleansed away by the word, do vndoubtedly with one voice cry alowd in the eares of the Lord, for vengeance vpon the whole realme. The papistes cannot be conuerted, but hardened & turned out of the way, there is so foule disorder, and so many stumbling blockes cast in the way. The Diuell hath elbowe rome to spreade abrode, to plant & water all kinde of errours, so fewe there be to withstand him. But to come to that particular which I hadde in this treatise: there are the most in number, who hauing Popelie taken from them and not taught throughly and sufficiently in the Gospel, doe stand as men indifferēt, so that they may quietly inioy the worlde, they care not what religion come: they are like naked men fitte and readie for any state almost that may bee put vpon them. The life of these is exceeding prophane, they haue hardned themselues in their sinnes, by reason whereof they ga-

ther partly out of their owne braine, & partly out of some sayings in the word, by which they cloke & defēd their own corrupt wayes. I haue therefore gathered the most commō principles of their faith and religion, by which they armie themselues, against true repentance, and right vnderstanding: I haue not noted all, neither haue I medled with those seuerall grosse absurdities, wherewithe hath proper to himself, for that should be infinite. I trust your Lordship will rightly construe my good meaning, and take in good worth this simple treatise, pitying the case of the poore church of Christ, which is so ful of grieuous sicknesses and sores, that vnlesse she be releaued and cured, she will scarcelie aduise to continue life. She cannot but most humbly craue his duties at the hands of those which are nerre about her dear Sonne. From whom she hath no meanes more receiued wonderfull protection and defence against aduersaries that they make knowne her state, and labour the re-

very & retaining of her health. Because it doth stand not only with their eternal glorye in the worlde to come, but also with their honourable estate in this life. W hich cannot be established to florish in continuance, vnlesse the Lorde God [illegible] so erected in the middest [illegible] may florishe. For where [illegible] and dispised of those [illegible] nisheth in her bosome, [illegible], for it is against [illegible] him an aduer- [illegible] ver, & of himselfe [illegible] destroy mighty [illegible] in fauour [illegible] feare of [illegible] holy migh- [illegible] yee al hea- [illegible] increase [illegible] glory & [illegible] nble to

A briefe discourse of certaine pointes of the religion, whiche is among the common sorte of Christians: *which may bee termed the Countrie* divinitie: with a plaine and manifest confutation of the same, after the order of a Dialogue.

Zelotes. Atheos.

Zelotes. WEll ouertaken [illegible] tell this w[illegible]

Atheos. [illegible]

Zelot. [illegible]

Ath. [illegible] logue.

Zelot. [illegible] ye dwe[illegible]

Ath. [illegible]

Zelot. [illegible]

Ath. Wee haue an honest man our Curat.

Zelot. Doth he teach his flock?

Ath. Yee doth his good will and more ye cannot require of a man.

Zelot. Yee did commende him euen now, to be an honest man.

Ath. Commende hym: yea I maye commende him: I am perswaded wee haue the beste Priesse in this Countrye. wee woulde bee lothe too forgoe him for the Learnedest of them all.

Zelot. I pray yee let mee heare what his vertues be for which ye doe commende him.

Ath. [illegible] a person as [illegible] a fo[illegible] a very good fellowe, hee will [illegible] good fellowes and honest man meete together too spende his [illegible] at the [illegible] I cannot tell, [illegible] preaches, but hee doeth [illegible] the [illegible] them all. I am [illegible] when hee is gone wee shall [illegible]

Zelot. Bee these the greate vertues which yee doe commende hym for

for, hee may haue all these, and yet bee more meete for to keepe swine, then too bee a Shephearde ouer the flocke of Christ, is hee able to teache the people, and doeth hee instructe them in Gods woorde.

Ath. I know not what teaching you mould haue, hee doeth teache the [illegible] as well as any of them all, and I [illegible] there is as good edifying in the [illegible] and Bonnilies, as in any [illegible] cher canne make: let us [illegible] first.

Zelot. That is not all which is requised in a Minister, [illegible] yeeres olde canne doe all this [illegible] not teache them too know the [illegible] GOD and reprehend [illegible] the people?

Ath. [illegible] there bee any [illegible] will seeke [illegible] for hee will [illegible] two at Bowles [illegible] is none of these [illegible]

if hee were, he could not be so well liked of some (and those not of the meanest) as hee is.

Zelot. Doe yee call the Preachers of Gods woorde busie Controllers? doe they goe further then Gods woorde doth leade them.

Ach. Wee may call them busie controllers, & I thinke wee shall doe nothing [illegible] poore a man as I am, I woulde not [illegible] shillings that wee hay one [illegible] remote of my minde.

Zelot. Some poore men perhaps.

Ach. I [illegible] the best in the Parishe, [illegible] not so well like of our Curat, if [illegible] way.

Zelot. I perceiue now what manner of man your Curat is, and like maister like scholler.

Ach. [illegible] I pray yee.

Zelot. Why so? I shall now vnmeete [illegible] how ignorant you are. Let [illegible] yee concer-

[illegible] nothing [illegible] an honest [illegible]

Zelot. Nay all your speech doeth bee-wraye that yee are a carnall man, for you haue made a verye fine description of a good Curate, what meane yee when yee say hee is a good fellowe, and will not sticke to spende his mony among good fellowes, is it not beecause hee is a potte companion.

Ath. Doe yee mislike good fellowship? is it not lawfull for honest men to [illegible] bee merry together.

Zelot. I doe not mislike [illegible] friendship, whiche is in the Lorde [illegible] in [illegible] Godlinesse, but I mislike this vice, whiche ouerfloweth euerye where, [illegible] kardes meete together and [illegible] and the minister whiche [illegible] them, to bee one of the [illegible] shoulde bee at his studie to bee vppon the Alebench at Cardes [illegible]

Ath. I perceiue you are one of those curious, and [illegible] allowe no recreation [illegible] men doe: [illegible] would haue [illegible] their bookes [illegible]

Zelot. Nay my [illegible] lowe that [illegible]

men call so, whiche is no recreation, but a torment to a Godly minde, to see men drunken, to heare them sweare, and rayle, to spende their goodes and their time so lewdely, and hee that shoulde teach them to bee a Ringleader: as there be many as it seemeth, which are entred into the ministerie, for none other purpose, but too live an ydle life, too haue leysure to playe at Cardes, or Tables, and bowles all the Weeke. And therefore they haue no skill to teache, but like vnsauerye salte, are not good enen for the dunghill.

Ath. These thinges were vsed beefore yee were borne, and will bee when you are gone, so long as men thinke no hurt when they play and be merry.

Eutr. I perceiue yee are of the right stampe, yee are dight vppon an argument, whiche may well bee termed olde Suersebe, because it bringeth a reason whiche doeth sticke by manye, when all other reasons forsake them. But let vs put this olde fellowe out of his new coate, and yee shall see how a leane shrimpe hee is, and so feeble, that hee cannot goe on foote: these thinges were vsed before you, therefore you were borne, so were all other naughtie vy-

ces

ces, are they nowe good because they bee olde? Because men committed them before I was borne, and will doe when I am dead.

Ath. I meane not so, but there were as wise men, and wiser then be now among our Forefathers: and they would not haue vsed nor allowed such thinges if they had not beene good: they knewe well enough what they did. Let not vs be more precise then they were.

Zelot. I perceiue you grounde your fayth and your doinges vpon men, and not vpon Gods worde.

Ath. I praye God, we may followe our Forefathers, and not more then they did: what should we seeke to bee too wyser or better then they? woulde wee couldee bee but as wise as they did.

Zelot. Doe you not thinke there were among your forefathers, murtherers, adulterers, drunkards, and such like.

Ath. I thinke there have been wayes euill, euen from the world's ende.

Zelot. Wouldeyee haue vs to followe those, and to take their vices?

Ath. Wee are not to follow any thing but that whiche is good: and those whiche were godly and wise.

Zelot. Is there anye thing good, but that whiche GOD setteth downe in his woorde: and were any wise and Godly, but such as did followe the will of God expressed in his worde?

Ath. There is nothing good but of GOD, and suche as bee as hee commaunde.

Zelot. Then you see olde suerseberyd [illegible] groundes, and your lustye champion is manifested to bee but skinne and bones, and the same draugh rotten: for now by your owne confession doeth [illegible] that the [illegible] of God is the onely rule and wee must followe our Forefathers no further then they follow the word of God, You must not followe David nor [illegible] in everything they did. Furthermore also these naughtie vices and corruptions came from the wicked forefathers, and not from the godly, which followed Gods word.

Ath. That is true, but I will follow

low our forefathers, nowe there is no loue then they liued in friendshippe, and made merrie together, nowe there is no good neighbourhood: nowe euery man for himselfe, and are readie to pull one another by the throate.

Zelot. There are but a fewe of your minde in this thing, are there?

Ath. Yes the greatest parte: for I know almost none, but they will affirme this matter.

Zelot. If the greatest parte be of your minde, wherefore is there not then a greate deale of loue and friendshippe where you say there is none: why doe yee not beeing the moste in number, repaire the ruines of that olde faithfull friendship, which yee say is decayed: yee say that there is not loue and friendshippe, and yee seeme to lament the want of them, and yet there is none in your selues: for yee bee very full of malice and strife, is there any hurt in being blinde, but that yee may see your owne folly and vanitie in this point, when with open mouth, yee crye for loue, loue, and bee the greatest enemies thereunto your selues.

Moreouer yee follow your owne lusts

and doating opinion, that yee imagine a thing whiche neuer was, for the world hath euer beene like it selfe, full of debate and strife, a very fewe in all ages whiche haue had true loue: Agayne, you call none loue, but that carnall loue, whiche is in eating and drinking, and other foolishe delightes. That whiche is the true loue, you condemne to bee hatred: For if a man admonishe and reprooue you for any naughtie vice, whiche is the greatest louer by and by yee stampe and stare like madde men, and saye nowe there is no loue, except a man doe flatter yee, and bee partaker of your foule and beastely sinnes, yee are at deadly hatred with him. But let vs returne agayne too Syr Robert, yee sayde hee was as good a Liuer as the best of them all.

Ath. I say so still, for hee is content with his liuing, many of your spiritual men are neuer satisfied: for with that poore liuing he poore he doth keepe a good house and doeth relee the poore.

Zeal. You prooue him to bee a good Liuer, by comparing him with those whiche are woorse: It is all one

as

as if a manne woulde prooue a theefe whiche hath ſtollen twentye pounde too bee a good theefe, becauſe hee is not ſo euill as hee, which hath ſtollen a thouſande poundes.

Ath. Yee doe not well to compare true men with theeues.

Zelot. Is not hee a theefe which doeth take the hire and doth not that whiche hee ſhoulde doe for it.

Ath. Yee is as good as a theefe. I thinke ſo.

Zelot. Doe not they robbe them whiche take the liuing and doe not feede the flocke. Let mee aske yee a queſtion, ifa man robbe and ſteale and then keepe a good houſe, and feaſte his neighbours with it, and bee a Murtherer, will his good houſe keeping make him a good liuer?

Ath. No that it will not.

Zelot. Let mee aske yee another queſtion, which is the worſe murtherer, he which doth murther the body, or hee which doth murther the ſoule?

Ath. Yee which doth murther the ſoule.

Zelot. Then

Zelot. Then hee whiche shoulde feede mens bodies committed vnto him, and doeth pine them to death, is a murtherer and hee which shoulde feede mens soules & doth sterue them, is a greater murtherer, and so his good house keeping cannot make him a good man, robbing so many, and killing so many.

Ath. I well not beleeue that hee doth kill any.

Zelot. That is because yee will not beleeue the saying of Christ: if the blinde leade the blinde they both fal into the ditch, nor that God will saue men by the woorde preached.

Ath. I hope wee be not blind, I trust I beleeue all well.

Zelot. You are blinde and shoulde haue a guyde to leade yee the way to heauen, and to instruct yee in true godlinesse.

Ath. I will not learne the way to heauen of any man, for I hope I haue a good faith and as good a soule to Godwarde as the best learned of them all.

Zelot. Whereby doe you try your good messe & your faith? by other way then by your owne blinde fancies?

Ath. I

Ath. I meane well: I hurte no man, nor I thinke no man anye hurte: I loue God aboue all: and put my whole trust in him: what woulde yee haue more? they preache and teache, they can tell vs no more but this: when they haue all sayd what they can.

Zelot. Nowe yee tumble it vppe together in deede: I see well it is no small trouble to bring an ignoraunt man, for to see his folly.

Ath. I haue vttered my conscience if I saye not well, I am ready for to learne.

Zelot. What neede you learne, when yee know all afore hand euen vp to the all the preachers can tell yee.

Ath. Yee take me at the worst, that least sell of vs all may learne.

Zelot. You sayde that yee loue GOD aboue all: and you thinke there be no doubt I take it your meaning is, that yee doe loue GOD with all your heart, and your neighbour as your selfe, and more than this cannot be taught.

Ath. Yee speake not this if I speake not, God forgiue vs.

Zelot. This is all, is it not, what needeth

deth any more reaching.

Ath. Let men doe this first, and afterwarde, if they will learne more, let them.

Zelot. Yee giue very graue aduise now, if there were any to followe it.

Ath. I haue no learning, but I thinke if men would doe this, it woulde not bee so euill as it is.

Zelot. If euery thing which is spoken truely, be spoken wisely, then you haue vttered a very wise saying, for I am sure there cannot be a truer. I beleeue in deede ye haue no learning, and I am sure as you say, if men should do that, there would not be so much euill amongvs.

Ath. Yee thinke peraduenture that I speake like a fool, I would I were as wise as those which I heare say so.

Zelot. Haue yee many of these great wise men, which would haue men first fulfill the ten Commandements and then run to heare sermons.

Ath. All things are well spoken which are well taken: if they be not wyse I praye [illegible] I haue nought too [illegible] with them.

Zelot. Yee

Zelot. Yee are a playne man and haue skyll in outwarde thinges, will yee giue mee leaue too aske you a question in a matter wherein yee haue vnderstanding.

Ath. I thanke God I dare answeare to a question.

Zelot. Are ye a carpenter or a mason?

Ath. I haue no skill that way.

Zelot. Then if there be a great house of tymber and stone, to builde, you can not build it?

Ath. If ther were no better buylders then I, there woulde not bee so many gay houses.

Zelot. If one shoulde say, here is a very fayre house to bee buylded, it is no more but to lay a good foundation, to rayse vp the walles and to finish the roofe, you knowe this all: therefore yee cann build it for yee know all.

Ath. I know this is all but I cay be answer a little of it, vnless a carpenter or a buylder doe teach me.

Zelot. Yee say well, euen so, we know GOD with all our harte, with all our mynde, and our neighbour, as our

is all, but we knowe not howe to doe one iotte of it, vnlesse wee bee taught it out of Gods word.

Ath. God graunt wee maye for there be ouer many which doe not regard it.

Zelot. Let mee nowe aske you further, put case one shoulde saye vnto you, thus, you knowe all that is to bee done in buylding an house: the foundation the walles and the roofe, doe these first, if yee will learne any more, yee may goe to some Carpenter.

Ath. There is no man so foolishe, to giue a man that counsel.

Zelot. It is the Counsell you gaue, and the wise men which yee spake of, which would haue men first to do and afterward to learne.

Ath. [illegible] to vse that they knowe, and afterwards to learne more: for there [illegible] more knowledge and [illegible]

[illegible] pitifull case to see, how the world is blinded, yee bring not [illegible] for there be [illegible] eares, whiche [illegible] whiche you speake: they neuer vnderstande that whiche Solomon

mon ſayth Prouerb, 1.cap.22.ver. Ye fooles be enemies vnto knowledge, or hate knowledge. Neither doe they knowe that which Saint Paul ſpeaketh. 1.Cor.8.2. If any man thinke he knoweth any thing, hee knoweth nothing as yet, as he ought to knowe. They neuer conſidered what the holy Ghoſt ſaith in the latter ende of the fifte chapter to the Hebrues, ver.12. Where he doth ſharply reproue them, becauſe they were children in vnderſtanding. Neither doe they know that al well doing proceedeth from fayth, and faith doth increaſe through knowledge: it grieueth me to ſtande vpon the matter, the ſaying is ſo buzardly.

Ath. You would haue al men diuines, I thinke it is not for plewmen to meddle with the ſcriptures.

Zelot. You thinke ſo, but I pray you to whom ſpeaketh the Lord by the Prophet Eſay, whē he ſaith: My people perith for want of knowledge. Vnto whom ſpeaketh the Lorde by the Prophete Hoſeas. Chap. 4. When he ſayth: there is no truth, there is no mercy, nor knowledge of godlinesse. But ſwearing, lying, killing, [illegible] mitting adultery. &c. Vnto whom ſpeaketh Saynt Paule ſaying. Brethren be not [illegible]

malice, be not children in vnderstãding, & vnto whom wrote Saint Peter exhorting so much vnto knowledge?

Ath. I thinke knowledge doth make men the worse, for there be no worse men then many that be great scripture mẽ: none wil deceiue a man sooner then they: they will speake a man faire before his face, and bee readye behinde his backe for to cutte his throate.

Zelot. It seemeth that you are no smal man, there is a great deale of good stuffe in you if you would vtter it.

Ath. I tel yee my mind plainely, I wil not flatter any man.

Zelot. Ye neede not tel me that, I know what manner of man yee be. Let vs come to your last words, yee did speake very lewdly, doe yee thinke, that knowledge doth make men woorse.

Ath. I heare many say so: if I speake [illegible] there be a number moe besides mee, [illegible]

Zelot. If knowledge make men the worse, then is it a thing that is not good [illegible] for that whiche is good can not make a man euill: is there any beast which [illegible] to knowe GOD or the will of

God

GOD whiche is most holy and pure, can make a man the woorse: No these men are more then beastes. Againe, the more a man knoweth of God the woorse he should be, a very filthie blasphemie.

Moreouer you are greatly deceiued, when ye thinke that all those whiche canne talke of the Scriptures haue knowledge, for there be very many carnal Pratlers, which seeme for to knowe much, and yet are as blind as Buzzards: these are naughty men, not because they haue knowledge but because they want knowledge.

Ath. I cannot tell, a man shall heare them saye a greate deale out of the Bible.

Zelot. No doubt a great deale more than they vnderstand: now when such do not doe well, doth it followe that Gods woorde maketh them woorse, nay ye be all blinde asses whiche cannot see, that because there is verye little true vnderstanding of Gods woord among men, therefore there is so much vncleanesse? For as the holy Ghost saith Psal. 119.9. Wherewithall shall a young mã cleanse his wayes? by taking heede thereto according to thy word. Now whereas you doe not vnderstand the woorde [illegible]

they take heede to their wayes, for to guide them by the ſame. And when God ſayth the woord doth cleanſe vs, his meaning muſt needes bee, that all ſuch as are not purged thereby, are foule and filthye in his eyes.

Ath. Ye haue of your preachers, trim pulpit men, and can ſay very well: but their deedes are as euill as other mens, for who is more couetous then they: they are neuer cõtent vntill they haue heaped liuing vppon liuing.

Zelot. Such skilful men as you, thinke if a man can preach or rather (as a number doe) prattle and haue a rowling tongue and can make ſome ſhewe of learning, that by and by he is a trim man, and hath great knowledge: when as indeede hee hath no true knowledge. for I count him too haue true knowledge, whiche hath ſo learned Christ, that hee is become a newe creature. Therefore Saint Iohn in the.3.chap.5.6.ver. of his first Epiſtle ſpeaking of Chriſt ſayth: That hee was made manifeſt too take away our ſinnes, and in him is no ſinne: Whoſoeuer abideth in him ſinneth not. Whoſoeuer ſinneth hath not ſeene him nor knowne him. Likewise in the firſt booke of Samuell.

cap.2.

cap, 2. verſ, 12. It is ſayd by the ſonnes of Ely, that they were the ſonnes of Beliall, and knew not God: and yet they were inſtructed in the Law, and taught the people. And for mine owne part I could neuer perceiue that any wicked man could preach worthy but one I meane concerning, the chiefe thing required in preaching, which is the declaration of the power of the ſpirit which ought for to appeare, to the conuerſion of ſinfull men. For to lay ope points of doctrine, they may doe it well.

Ath. It is not for vs that are ſimple men for to iudge who doeth well, and who doth not.

Zelot Yes that it is, for Saint Iohn ſaieth, rie the ſpirits whether they be of God. Our Sauiour Chriſt ſaieth, my ſheepe heare my voyce a ſtraunger they will not heare. Wherevpon it doth followe that hee which knoweth not when pure doctrine & wholeſome is vttered, is not as yet among the number of the ſheepe of Chriſt. For if he were indued with the ſpirit of god, he ſhould by the ſame ſpirit feele when wholeſome doctrine is deliuered vnto him.

Ath. If a man be [illegible] ſhall be able to iudge what [illegible]

otherwise hee cannot tell.

Zelot. It is not learning alone whiche must iudge of found preaching, for there be many learned men which cānot iudge well, as also there be many vnlearned which are very ready to discerne, all lyeth in this point the doctrine is of God, & not of men, and therefore those doe feele it, and iudge rightly whether they be learned or vnlearned, whom God doth inwardly teach with his spirite: for this cause S. Paule, 1. Cor. 14 doth shew that the word of God is so to be layd open in the congregation, that if there come in a man vnlearned or an infidel, he may be reproued & iudged, & the secrets of his heart made manifest. For if the word be not preached vnto the cōsciences of men, it goeth away like a dead sound. But we goe in-to many matters, I haue not forgotten your former words; but perhaps ye wold be loth to come to that agayne.

Truth. I am not ashamed of any thing, which I said, and I hope I neede not.

Zelot. Nay your wares are so fine, ye need not care which receive them, you loue God aboue all and with all your harte.

Truth. I doe, or els I were a beast, I [illegible] hanged which doeth not

that

that.

Zelot. Yee loue your neighbour as your selfe.

Ath. If I doe not I pray GOD forgiue mee, I am sure no man can accuse mee.

Zelot. Then you looke by this meanes to come to heauen?

Ath. I hope if there be but three in all this country, goe to heauen, I shalbe one of them, I meane so well.

Zelot. Ye know the cõmandements of God, and fulfill them also doe ye not?

Ath. I thanke God I know them and will fulfill them as nigh as God shall giue me grace.

Zelot. Doe yee breake none of them?

Ath. Wee breake them all of vs daily and hourely: for there is no man which can keepe them all.

Zelot. You breake some of them, and keepe other some, Ye keepe the greatest doe ye not? and breake the least?

Ath. I keepe the greatest, and therefore I hope God will heare mee for the rest.

Zelot. Which doe ye [illegible] to be greatest, that ye are so cle[illegible]

Ath. I am no theefe, nor murtherer, nor traitour: I pay euery man his owne: I thinke this is Gods bidding.

Zelot. Are there no greater then these?

Ath. I take him for an honest man which doth keepe these, and he that doth not I defie him.

Zelot. Euen so will I take you to bee, when I know that yee doe keepe them: But I maruell yee are so bold for to bid defiance to so many.

Ath. Doe not you defie them al: and al other euill doers?

Zelot. If I should doe so, you & I should be together by the eares by and by.

Ath. Then belike yee count me to bee such an one: yee ought not to iudge.

Zelot. A man may know the tree by the fruites: but let this passe: I pray ye tell mee whether he which hath moe Gods then one, shall be a murtherer?

Ath. I take him to bee worse.

Zelot. Then the first commaundement is greater, then those which you named.

Ath. If a man thinke there is any God [illegible] farre wide.

Zelot. You haue none other Gods but one then?

Ath. It were pitie of my life if I should not be of that beliefe. If all the commandements were as easie to bee kept as this, we should doe wel.

Zelot. Then yee neuer brake the first Commaundement.

Ath. Neuer in all my lyfe: neither shal euer any make me to bee but of Gods belief: for they which beleeue there be many Gods are not of a right minde.

Zelot. Can you then keepe the greater and not the lesse: I doe not doubt but if a man can keepe the first he can keepe all, for the first is as hard as any of the rest, although such skilful Clearks as you, count it to bee very easie.

Ath. Then it were an easie matter to keepe them.

Zelot. What if I prooue vnto yee that you breake it, will you confesse your folly?

Ath. I wil neuer be mad [illegible] which I know is contrary.

Zelot. Let me aske ye this question, whether that man doth keepe this commandement, which thinketh there is [illegible]

and yet giueth that honour and woorship vnto other things, which he should giue vnto him alone.

Ath. I did neuer put any trust in images, nor I neuer thought they could do mée any good.

Zelot. I doe not speake of that outward giuing away of Gods worship: but of an other which is inwarde in the minde.

Ath. I haue allwayes had God in my minde, and I trust I haue neuer woorshipped any besides him.

Zelot. Is not that a mans God whiche he loueth best: and which he doth most delight in?

Ath. Loke what a man loueth best & taketh most delight in, I thinke he maketh it his god, because we ought to loue god best.

Zelot. Doe ye not thinke that the thing which a mã most setteth his mind vpõ, and most seeketh after, is that which he most loueth?

Ath. I suppose euery man loketh after that which he most loueth.

Zelot. Then he which seeketh the world more then God, loueth the world more thé God, and therfore in very deed maketh the world his God.

Ath. God

Ath. God forbid that any man shoulde make more account of this worlde, then of God I hope fewe doe so.

Zelot. You hope few doe so, but a man may easily proue that you doe so, and I am sure the most doe so.

Ath. I trust yee shall hardly prowe it by mee, although yee iudge so euill of mee.

Zelot Can a man seeke after God, or set his delight vpon God any other way, then by seeking after the knowledge and obedience of Gods wil, which he hath reuealed in his word? or can a man loue God, and not loue his word.

Ath. Gods word is good, we must loue that al of vs be ruled by it, for it doth tel vs nothing but that which is good.

Zelot. How slily you wind out of the matter I aske one thing which yee doe not answeare: & that is whether a man can seeke God, and not seeke him in his worde?

Ath. Euery man cannot bee a Diuine, wee that bee vnlearned men are not [illegible] meddle with so high matters.

Zelot. Now ye speake in your kinde [illegible] vnlearned men, we haue nought to do [illegible] God, we may not meddle with [illegible]

Ath. You take all [illegible]

yée doe not heare me say so.

Zelot. Doe I take ye wrong, doe ye not say so? tel me is not God as high a matter as his word?

Ath. God is aboue all.

Zelot. Can we haue to doe with God, to serue him any way but by his word?

Ath. The word of GOD doth tell vs what we are to doe.

Zelot. Then it followeth when yee say we may not meddle with so high matters, that yee were euen as good for to say, wee haue nought to doe with GOD. We owe him no duetie of obediéce, we need not care to know his wil: because he is as high a matter as his word.

Ath. You put in a greate deale more then I sayde, and take mee still at the worst.

Zelot. Nay you are so deepe in your speech, that yee vtter more in a woord, than a man can well lay open in an houres talke: Againe I take ye not at the worst, for make the best of it you can, and it must needs follow, that those which care not for the word of God, care not for him, neyther doe they [illegible] him, or loue him whiche doe not [illegible] nor loue his woorde.

Moreo-

Moreouer howe ſhall a man take delighe for to know the word, but it will cauſe him for to ſeeke to know it, that which is a mans iewell, he will ſometimes looke vpon it: but there are a number of yee which are indeede very Atheists, & ſet not a ſtraw by the knowledge of Gods will: for let a man tell yee of any duety which ye ſhould be taught out of the holy ſcriptures, by and by, this is your aunſweare, thoſe thinges are not for vs too meddle withall: it is not for vs too take of ſuch poyntes. But we are gone a greate way from the beginning of this matter, whiche is, that where yee did affirme that yee loue God with all your heart, and that yee haue none other Gods beſides him: Nowe the concluſion is prooued, that ye loue him as much as an olde ſhoe, and that indeede yee make the world your God becauſe ye ſeeke moſt after that.

Ath. Yée doe not vſe mée well in ſaying that I loue GOD no better then an olde ſhoe, I woulde yée ſhoulde know I loue him as well as the beſt of yée all: though indeede I cannot ſay ſo much.

Zelot. Be not angry man, for it is but a ſmall fault, for a great ſorte moe doe beare ye company, ye goe not alone. But because

ye make so great boſt. I pray ye tell me this ye haue ſeruants haue ye not?

Ath. I haue a poore houſholde.

Zelot. What doe you require of your ſeruant?

Ath. To obey my will and to doe that which I command him.

Zelot. What if hee care not ſo muche, as too knowe your will, but will ſaye: I will not meddle with ſo high matters, nothyng regarding to knowe your pleaſure: will yee ſay hee loueth yee, or hee is a good ſeruant?

Ath. I cannot ſay that he is a good ſeruant, for if he were he would not take ſkorn but be glad to heare my will.

Zelot. Ye ſay right, but why doe ye not conſider that, when God hath ſet down his will and you care not for to know it, that ye loue him as well and doe him as good ſeruice, as ſuch a ſeruant ſhould doe vnto you.

Ath. God helpe, if this which you ſaye be true.

Zelot. It is moſt true, not only that men make the world their G O D, becauſe they care more after it then they do after Gods kingdom, but alſo, S. Paule calleth the Diuell the God of this world, as alſo in another

place

place he sayeth, there is some whose God is their bellie.

Ath. God forbid that any man shoulde take the diuell to bee God, or doe him suche honour.

Zelot They are no smal number which make him their God.

Ath. You may say so, but I could neuer come into that mans company yet, whiche would not vtterly defie him.

Zelot. If I should professe great kindnes vnto you now, and in the meane time draw my dagger and breake your pate, wouldeye beleeue I were your friend?

Ath. I pray God keepe mee from such friendes: which giue good wordes and doe euill deedes, I had rather they tolde me their hatred.

Zelot. Then ye answere that we must not looke what men say, but what they doe.

Ath. They had better not speake well, then speake well and doe euill.

Zelot. Likewise I answere you that we must not looke to mens wordes, when they defie the Diuell, but to their deeds by which they obey him and doe his will: for when they defie him in their wordes, they honour him for God in their workes.

Ath. I

Ath. If there bee anye suche, I praye GOD amend them, for that is the worst which I wish them.

Zelot. I could like your prayer well if it were not only for a fashion, as yee vse many such like. For when it commeth to the tryal, you will easily bee founde among the number of such.

Ath. If yée thinke mée to bee suche an one, yée iudge worse then euer any man did, I thank GOD I can bring many to testifie that I am an honest man and alwayes haue beene, I will be founde as good as your selfe, though yée finde so greate faulte with other, as though yée were not like other men.

Zelot. I iudge nothing but that which is easie to see, in you and a number more, and which I canne, and will proue to your face.

Ath. Yée are a stranger vnto mee, will yée iudge of mée, and knowe not what my workes are.

Zelot. Hee which cannot spie yee, hath but a simple vnderstanding: I pray yee tell mee, such as doe the workes and will of the Deuill, are they not of the Diuell. Saint Iohn 1. Epistle 3. sayth, Hee that committeth

teth euill is of the Diuell. Likewise our Saui-our Christ telleth the obstinate Iewes, Iohn. 8. Which boasted themselues to be the children of Abraham, and the children of God, that they were of their father the Diuel, and why, because they did his will. Euen so you take part with such as are euill, and wicked, shal I aske ye a little question?

Ath. Yea, aske what yee will, & iudge what yee like best, but I will answeare as well as I can.

Zelot. Do ye not think that al Whore-maisters, Drunkards, Dicers, Raylers, Swearers, and such like, are the Diuels armye, as on the other side, such as profes Gods word and liue godly, are his souldiers, & doe fight vnder his banner?

Zelot. They are well holpen vp which serue such a maister.

elot. Why are you so vnwise then as to serue him: for all those which take part with those wicked men, & raile vpon those which are godly, doe fight vnder the same standerd, and seeke to vpholde the kingdome of the Diuell, labouring for to ouerthrow the Gospel, and to banish Gods word.

Ath. They are woorthie to haue their eares cut from their head, which rayle vpon

 godlie

honest men or seeke to slaunder them.

Zelot. This is a common thing among al the pack of ye, if there be any man which hath a care to know God, and seeketh after his word, & wil not cõmit those beastly sins which ouerflow in al places, then you which cannot abide to haue Gods word set foorth deuise a number of lies and slanders against them, calling them Puritanes rasscals & many such like. On the contrary part, let a man bea common drunkard, a Dicer an ignorãt beast which hath no knowledge of god, a wretched worldling, or any kinde of suche person: he is an honest man: for they bee those whom you would haue a man lose his eares for: hee is nowe counted the honest man which liueth as the most doe.

Ath. There bee a number goe so farre they cannot tel what they may do: they wil not doe as their honest neighbours doe, they wilbe wiser then their betters: what should they meddle with Gods woorde, it maketh them busie in checking euery man. It was neuer merry since mẽ vnlearned haue meddled with the scriptures.

Zelot. I maruel how far you would go if a man should follow ye, yee are like a puddle which the more a man stirreth it, the more filthy mud ariseth: ye are like a sinke, where

the

the more a mã stirreth, the more is the stink.

Ath. What meane ye by that?

Zelot. I mean that your heart is ful of foule stinking & rottē matter, which floweth out at your mouth. I confesse that those men be not to be allowed which meddle with that which they shoulde not: but I know whom you meane, when ye say they goe so far, that they know not what they may do: ye speake of them which seek to know God, whom ye thinke to be halfe madde.

Ath. There be some of them which are not bwk learned, what should they do other wise thē their fathers before them: I knew some of their fathers honest men, and neuer troubled themselues that way.

Zelot. I did know your mind wel enough for al your spite is against those which learn out of Gods word to know their duetie towards the Lord: & because as S Peter sayeth, they do not run with ye to the same excess of riot, ye think it strāge & blasphemy. Again, ye cannot abide to be admonished, when ye cōmit any naughtie thing; Ye know not that God hath appointed his word for al sorts of men to be instructed in it throughly: for the holy Apostles exhort euery white man to great knowledge in the word.

Agayn ye know not that which the Lorde

comandeth in ſundry places, that we ſhould admoniſh, and reproue one another: if any do amiſſe: & not as you blind obſtinate mẽ, which when a man doth after a godly manner admoniſh yee: hee is by and by a buſie medler, what hath he to doe, he ſhal not anſwere for you. And becauſe ye may not doe what lewdnes yee liſt, vncontrolled, ye ſay it was neuer merry ſince euery mã might read the ſcriptures. It is maruellous that man ſhould ſo become beaſts without all vnderſtanding.

Ath. It would not greeue me to be reproued by thoſe which are learned, but now euery Iacke wilbe meddling.

Zelot. If you be reproued iuſtly by Gods worde, then is it God which doth reprooue ye are not to looke vpon the man. But when yee call them Iackes, and giue them other reproches, it is becauſe yee are blinde, and can diſcerne nothing but that which is of this worlde: For if yee could ſee how great glory the pooreſt true chriſtian is called vnto, to be the child of God, ye would not reuile thoſe whom God honoureth.

Ath. They will be medling in ſmal matters, if it were for great faults it were ſomewhat, but a man may not be merry nowe.

Zelot. Be

Zelot. Beyng vtterly blynde, and voyde of grace, yee count those sinnes which are foule and grosse, for to bee smal: swearing rayling, talking in your filthie ribaldry, singing fowle and beastly songes, these & such like are your pety faultes: this is your mirth which must not be hindred: For it is death to yee to haue any godlinesse spoken of, if it be ye cannot be merry. This dunghill mirth is that which men complaine of to be molested, and say it was happy in old time, when mē were not reproued for such things, now there be so many scripture men, that a man cannot tel what to say or what to doe.

Ath. There are none of yée all as holie yée would séeme for to bee, but haue faultes: yee see not your owne, but other mens.

Zelot. Hee which doth not repent and correct his own vitious nature and striue to obey God, is no good reprooner of others: But when yee say, men seeme to be holy and giue it as a matter of reproch, therein yee gée almost beyond the Diuel himselfe: for you see that I gainesay yee, or els yee would not inure it, but ye would euen powre out your stinking & rotten poyson like blasphemous and venemous beasts; ye would speake farer

this manner you that are so ful of the spirit, you that are Saintes and such like. What are you Diuels, are ye of the flesh, no doubt yee are vntil god cōuert ye. But we may see how diuelishly men are become wicked: when a man cānot make any appearāce to be godly and holy, but it is reproched as though it were a shameful thing to be led by the spirit. For otherwise why do they so obiect an honest thing to liue after the flesh, a shameful matter to be guided by the spirit.

Ath. God helpe vs if none be good but such, I hope honest and quiet men shalbe saued as well as they, although they cannot talke so well, nor run not to heare Sermons.

Rast. Nay you would haue others in better case then they, for you iudge them that be zealous in the Gospel & wold fainest of all other please God, to bee the worst men: and the more careful a man is to be holy to the Lord, the more he is disdained and misliked. Which doth euidently shew that such as you are led by the spirit of the Diuel. Yee led me so from one matter to another, that we are gone from something which ye vtteered. I remember ye sayd ye put your whole trust in God.

Ath. I sayd so, & so I say still: though I haue no learning, yet I trust I beleeue as wel as any scripture man of them all.

Zelot. Ye bragge very boldly, I pray yee tell me this, are yee sure ye shalbe saued.

Ath. No, nor you neither, nor the best of yée all, wee muste commit that to God.

Zelot. What is it that yee put all your whole trust in him for? Is it not this, that GOD hath promised vnto ye eternall life and that ye beleue he wil performe his promise?

Ath. That he doth loue me and giueth me all thinges.

Zelot. Are yee not sure that he doeth loue yee?

Ath. I hope he doeth loue me: but I am not sure.

Zelot. Doth not the scripture saye that whosoeuer doth trust in him shalbe saued?

Ath. God sayth so indeede, and I beleeue it is so.

Zelot. You knowe doe ye not, that yee put your whole trust and beliefe in him?

Ath. I knowe I doe and I hope I shal alwaies doe.

Zelot. If God cannot lie, when he saith all that trust in him shalbee saued. and you know that yee put your whole trust in him, Wherefore doe ye not then knowe that yee shalbe saued?

Ath. That which God sayth, is true, for he cannot lie: I put my trust in none but in him: I hope to be saued, what would yee haue more: I will beleeue neuer a one of them all when they saye they knowe they shalbe saued: I think they would make themselues Gods.

Zelot. Naye suche as you make your selues Gods, when yee ioyne thinges so contrary together & can make them agree: fire and water may lodge together in one bedd, at your inne, and agree well together: For they are no more contrary then that which yee affirme, when yee say God hath promised that all which beleeue in him shalbe saued, you are sure yee beleeue in him, and that ye put al your whole trust in him & yet yee cannot tel whether yee shalbee saued. But I cannot greatly maruell at this, for yee knowe as well what fayth is, as doeth a Goose.

Ath. I trust I knowe, and I meane well. God knowety my meaning howsoeuer

you take me.

Zelot. Let me aske yee this question, when a man prayeth, if hee doe not beeleeue that whiche hee sayeth, doth hee well?

Ath. Wee must beleeue that which wee speake when wee praye, or else it is nothing worth.

Zelot. When Christ teacheth vs too praye, and too call GOD our Father, ought wee not for to knowe that he is our Father?

Ath. Wee ought for to knowe, that which GOD teacheth vs and to beleeue the same.

Zelot. Must we not beleeue it without doubting or wauering, as S. Iames saith hee that doubteth is like vnto a waue of the Sea tossed with the winde, neither let that man thinke that he shal receiue any thing?

Ath. Wee must not doubt for hee that doubteth is in a wrong beleefe, we must put all our trust in God.

Zelot. Then when ye cal GOD Father ye beleue that surely which ye speak, then are ye sure that he loueth ye, for a father doeth loue his child, euen men which are euill doe giue good giftes vnto their children when

they

they aske, becauſe they loue them, muche more, the heauenly Father which is perfectly good doeth loue his children, that is thoſe which beleeue in him, then I reaſon in this wiſe, he that beleeueth ſurely that GOD is his father, hee is ſure that God loueth him: he that is ſure God loueth him is ſure of eternall life: therfore al thoſe which praye aright, are ſure they ſhalbe ſaued.

Ath. I pray God wee may call vppon him.

Zelot. Tel me further what yee thinke, was not Abraham ſure he ſhould be ſaued, likewiſe Dauid, Paule, and others?

Ath. Euerye man cannot bee like thoſe. Can you ſay yée are like vnto Abraham?

Zelot. Doth not the ſcripture ſay, that Abraham is the Father of the faithfull, and that thoſe are the children of God, whiche walke in the ſteppes of the faithfull Abraham? I confeſſe indeede that euery one cannot attaine to ſo great a meaſure of fayth as thoſe had, but yet wee muſt come to the ſame fayth, becauſe we haue the ſame God, the ſame couenant and promiſes, the ſame ſpirit is giuen vnto vs which beleeue. Saynt

Paule

Paule in the 4. chap to the Ephesians sayth there is one God, one faith, one baptisme. If there be but one, then ours must bee the same that theirs was.

Ath. Yea, but for al that it is presumption for men to say they knowe they shalbee saues.

Zelot. I see that popish dung doth stick stil between your teeth, whē they teach men that it is presumption to be out of doubt.

Ath. What tell ye mee of the Pope. I care not for him, I woulde both hee and his Dung, were buried in the Dunghill.

Zelot. I know there be many which care not for the Pope, but yet beleeue muche of his doctrine: they be those which wee call Athiests, of no religion, but look whatsoeuer any prince doth set foorth, that they wil professe.

Ath. I thinke that is good, ought not wee for to obey our Princes, and would yee haue vs to take vpon vs for to be wiser then they and their Counsellers.

Zelot. I doe knowe yee were an Athiest, setting vp men in the place of

God

God worse then a Turke.

Ath. Wherefore doe ye say so?

Zelot. Tel me this, are wee for to obey men if they command that which is contrary to that which God commandeth?

Ath. I thinke not so.

Zelot. Is there any mo then one truth, or one religion, which is the right, and that which God commandeth?

Ath. There can be but one truth that is certaine.

Zelot. Then when one Prince commandeth one religion, another ariseth afterwarde and commandeth the contrary: Will ye without difference obey them both? is not this for to deny God? is not this for to be worse then a Turke?

Ath. I am sure ye will not denie, but that we must obey.

Zelot. Hee whiche doeth disobeye the Prince, doth disobey GOD, vnto his damnation, where the Prince setteth foorth and mainteineth Gods worde. But if there be a Prince which maketh lawes against the lawes of God, we must obey GOD rather then men. But there are many as I sayde before which in any Princes dayes will speake thus, if religion shoulde turne (saye they) as

God

God forbid it should, but if it doe, it is our partes to be obedient. Are not these Athiestes, haue they not denied GOD, when they sent men in his place? And looke no higher but what men commande. But yee haue drawne me away agayne from the matter we were in hand with, where ye sayd it is presumption for a man to say he knoweth he shalbe saued: I may aske ye a question I know ye wil answere very boldly.

Ath. **I knowe no cause why I shoulde not answere boldly.**

Zelot. Ye say true, for blind bayarde is the boldest horse in the cart, although he be almost drowned in one slow yet he will not stick at another, he wil through when al the rest wil straine curtesie. But let vs come to the matter whether is it greater presumption for to beleeue that God is true, or for to doubt of the certeintie of his promise? & whether doeth that man honoure GOD most which giueth credit to his word, or he which doubteth whether he wil perfourme the same?

Ath. **It must néeds be graunted that he which beleeueth God of his word doeth wel and he that doeth not doeth euill.**

Zelot. Yee,

Zelot. You say true, for if a prince make an offer vnto some man whō he fauoureth, and he should make answeare, I doubt of it, I scarce beleue the performance of your promise: would not the Prince thinke him selfe greatly dishonoured to haue it doubted, whether he be a mā of his word. If he should sweare for the performāce of his promise, & the party not trust him, he would neuer put that vp, or beare such an iniury. Then it must needs follow that whē God hath boūd him selfe both by promise & by oth, as it is saide Heb. cap. 6. ver. 17. How great presūption is it not for to beleeue him? it is all one as too thinke God may lie, or that he may bee forsworne which is horrible blasphemie.

Ath. I graunt this is true, if God should tel any man that he should be saued, if he did not then beleeue him. But where is that man whiche can say God euer tolde him so? Doth he tel any one man so?

Zelot. Yea that he doth, for that which he sendeth vnto al in general, he sēdeth vnto euery one particular: for is it not all one, if a mā be condemned for treason to haue his pardō sent him being but one mā alone, or hauing a great sort mo cōdēned vnto death with him, a general pardō is sent for thē all?

Ath. That

Ath. That is alone for he hath his part in it.

Zelot. Euen so is it betweene God and vs, we were al condēned, hee hath sent a general pardō to as many as beleeue the same, that whosoeuer trusteth in Christ hee shalbe saued. God therefore hath tolde some men, that is such as beleue that they shalbe saued, and such as doubt of his promise & his oth, they shalbe dāned. Therefore it is al one in those which beleue, as if he had sent a particular message vnto them.

Ath. I neuer heard so much in all my life before.

Zelot. I beleeue so, For S.R. can no great skill in this geare: he can whip ouer a newe payre of cardes nimbly, and tyrle a dye: but he should be the messenger of the Lorde of hostes, euen as the Prophete sayth his lips should keepe knowledge, and men shoulde enquire at his mouth, he shoulde open all the Counsel of God vnto the people, & not let them run headlong as they doe vnto destruction. He should instruct them in all the doctrine of fayth, and repentance, and so guyde them in the feare of God.

Zelot. All men cannot do alike, we must accept their good will, euery man cannot be a Preacher.

Zelot. Because yee care not for seeking

king after eternal life, yee are content to accept of nothing: and becauſe yee loue your luſts, and hate to be refourmed, yee abhorre the vſe of preaching: and as a poore man as ye are, ye would not for xl. ſhillings ye had a Preacher among you.

Ath. Pæ euer take me at the worſt, I allowe preaching, it is good nowe and then, but ſome can keepe no meaſure nor tel whē they haue done: Againe they be ouer hot and ſeuere, and preach damnation to the people: Likewiſe they meddle with ſuche matters as they neede not, as Election and Predeſtination, what ſhoulde ſuch matters be ſpoken of among the people they make men worſe.

Zelot. I thinke the Diuell is the cunningeſt ſchoolemaiſter in the worlde. Other ſchoolemaiſters cannot bring groſſe heads and dullards to any paſſe but content them ſelues with the finer wits, for to trayne them vp in learning: but a man can almoſt lyght vppon none of his ſchollers, be they neuer ſuch blockheads, but they haue their leſſon at their fingers ends.

Ath. I thanke yee Sir for your good worde: But I neuer learned it of the Diuell nor neuer was any of his ſchollers: I

trust

trust I haue as litle to doe with him as you or any other.

Zelot. Where did ye learne it then, if not of the Deuill?

Ath. I haue heard honest men speake it, and some Preachers preach it.

Zelot. Then I perceiue ye learned it not of the Deuill himselfe, but at the mouth of some of his Vshers.

Ath. Wherefore doe ye call them the Deuilles Vshers? they haue skill in the worde of God, and ought to knowe what they say.

Zelot. I call them so because they teach the preceptes of the Deuill. And although they haue some knowledge in the worde, yet they neuer learned these thinges which you speake out of the worde.

Ath. Did the Deuill teach them because they haue it not in Gods word?

Zelot. It is the doctrine of the Deuill, because it is against Gods worde. For God neuer teacheth men those thinges which are contrary to the doctrine which he hath set downe in his worde.

Ath. I thinke ye will hardely proue these thinges for too bee against Gods worde.

Zelot. I would you could as easily proue your selfe to be a good man: for then we should soone agree.

Ath. You are not for to iudge of me no more then I am for to iudge of you: but there be many now a dayes which will take vppon them for to iudge men: they doe not learne that out of Gods worde I am sure.

Zelot. If I see a man drunken, or heare him sweare or raile and such like, and say, he is a naughty man, doe I iudge: shall I account him a good man, when I see he is naught?

Ath. When a man doth see those naughty vices, he may boldely say that such men are naught.

Zelot. In like maner when a man heareth one which holdeth euill and abhominable opinions against the truth, he may as boldely say he is naught: because they haue giuen iudgement of them selues, and haue shewed what they are. Nay they be suche as you which take vppon ye for to iudge: for let a man be more carefull then your selues for to serue God: and by and by you will enter into the secrets of his heart, which God onely doth know, & ye wil not

sticke

sticke for to pronounce that he is an hypocrite. In the meane time, let a man tell you that ye are wicked, when he doth see your wickednesse, ye aunswere, ye ought not to iudge: but I will come for to proue that the thinges which ye speake against preaching, are very deuilish and wicked. Ye saide thus, I allowe preaching, it is good nowe and then, but some can keepe no measure, nor will neuer haue done.

Ath. **I sayd so in deede, I will not denie my worde, and I thinke so still. For a man may haue ouermuch of any thing, and ynough is as good as a feast.**

Zelot. A very little is ynough for you, if the Preacher doe passe his houre but a little, your buttokes beginne for to ake, and ye wishe in your hearte that the Pulpit would fall.

Ath. **Ye may gesse twise before ye gesse so right.**

Zelot. Nay I canne gesse somewhat neere in suche a man as yee are: but I praye yee did yee neuer sitte at Cardes all night?

Ath. **Yes that I haue, and thought it but a short night too.**

Zelot. The cause why yee thinke an

houre so long at a Sermon,& a whole night so short at Cardes, is that ye delight in the one and care not for the other: the carding is ioyned with much sinne and seruice of the Deuill, the other is for to bring vs vnto the knowledge and feare of God: Marke nowe how much by your owne confession ye loue the Deuill more then God? for him doe ye loue most, whome ye delight to serue most.

Ath. Can we not serue God without so much preaching? I see they are neuer the better which runne most after sermons, they talke much, but I would haue them leaue talking and fall to doyng, we see no doyng but men are still euen as euill as before.

Zelot. Can your seruaunt serue you vnlesse he know your will?

Ath. No that he cannot.

Zelot. No more can you serue GOD without the knowledge of his will, and as for the rest of your speech, when ye crie out against preaching of Gods worde, that it maketh men neuer the better, and ye would haue them leaue talking, and fall to doing: I cōfesse there be a number which are counterfeit professors which liue not according

to

to the Gospel, and most commonly they be such, as haue but a little smacke of the Gospel, & yet thinke they know much, because they want the meanes, hauing the word either seldome or loosely preached. But I will confute your vanitie another waye in this point, tell me, are not these your sayinges? where the worde is sincerely preached, if any seeke to frame their liues after the same, when they doe either by worde reprooue your euill wayes, or by deede refuse your lewd maners: These men are full of the Spirite, these are precise fellowes, these are holie Saintes, these thinke them selues Gods fellowes: these thinke them selues better then all other men.

Ath. **We say so in deede, there is good cause why.**

Zelot. Then I pray ye tell me how those two things can hang together, when ye say there is no amendment of life, and yet ye complaine that they be ouer full of the spirite, ouer precise, and such like. May not euery man see, that ye pronounce things directly contrary the one to the other? that there is no amendment, and yet in effect ye say, they amend ouer fast.

Ath. **We doe not say that anybody a-**

mende ouer fast.

Zelot. When ye say they are ouer holy, & what should men be so curious & full of the spirite, what is this but to say, that they amend ouer fast? Is not this to amend when men by due instruction out of Gods worde come to repentaunce of their former vices? and haue a care to keepe themselues from the spottes of the rotten flesh and filthie world. Do not you and such as you are after a sort blaspheme, when ye reproche men with the spirite? Is it a shame for a man now a dayes for to haue any thing to doe with the spirite of God? While a man doth walke after the flesh in the lustes of vncleannesse, he is an honest man: But so soone as he is indued with any grace, ye wonder at him as crowes do at an owle, ye are ready to floute and mocke him out of his skinne. And as if the spirite of God were a spirite of dishonour and shame, ye mocke men with him. We may wonder at the long patience of God, which hath thus many yeeres suffered himselfe to be dishonoured, his spirite reuiled, his worde despised, and hath not bene reuenged, but no doubt the longer he hath taried, the heauier will the stroke be.

Ath. Men are men, what should they make

make themselues more holy then they be?

Zelot. If ye meane one way ye say right, for it is a naughty vice for men to seeme to be holy when they are not, or to seeme to be more holy then they be: but if ye meane another way (as I thinke ye do) that because men are sinfull by nature, why should they seeke for to be better, then do ye speake very wickedly. For God calleth men to repẽtance, to turne from their euill wayes: God guideth his seruantes at all times with his spirite, therfore S. Paule sayth Rom. 8. There is no condemnation nowe to those which are in Christ Iesus, which walke not after the flesh, but after the spirite. And againe in the same chapter, as many as are led by the spirite of God, are the sonnes of God. He sayth that if we liue after the flesh, we shall dye: in other places he doth shew, which are the workes of the spirite, and which are the workes of the flesh: And you like blasphemous wretches allow those which walke after the flesh, and condemne those which are led by the spirite.

Ath. **Are none induced with Gods Spirite, but such as runne to heare preaching?**

Zelot. Whosoeuer hath the spirite of

God, cannot but delight in the worde of God, which the ſame ſpirite hath vttered: The Lorde ſayth he which is of God, heareth Gods worde: The happie man is he (as we haue in the 1. Pſalme) which hath his delight in the lawe of the Lorde, and which doth meditate in the ſame day and night? We haue in the Pſalme 112 Bleſſed is the man which feareth the Lorde, he hath great delight in his commaundements.

Moreouer, the ſpirite of God doth not guide men without the worde. And therefore it is ſaide Pſalme 119. Thy worde is a lanterne vnto my feete, and a light vnto my pathes. S. Peter ſayth, 1. Epiſt. 1. He hath begotten vs againe not of mortall but of immortall ſeede, which he affirmeth to be the worde of God that indureth for euer. Likewiſe S. Iames ſayth cap. 1. of his owne good will begat he vs, by the word of truth. Seeing therfore that the holy Ghoſt doeth get men by the word, it followeth that all thoſe which ſet light by the worde, are led, not with the ſpirit of God, but with the ſpirit of the Deuil, I might alleadge a number of teſtimonies of Scripture to proue that ſuch as you which make ſo ſmal accompt of the ſacred worde of God, as there be a number,

yea

yea the greatest number which doe not set so much by it as they doe by an olde shoe, are despicers of God, woorse then brute beastes.

Ath. Cannot men be lead by Gods spirite and serue God, vnlesse they knowe the Scriptures: GOD forbidde that all those shoulde be awry which are not learned: is it not enough for plaine countrie men, plowmen, taylours, and such other, for to haue their ten commaundementes, the Lordes prayer, and the beliefe: I thinke these may suffice vs, what shoulde we meddle further: I knowe men which are no scripture men which serue GOD as well as the best of them all. Will ye condemne such?

Zelot. I sayde before that men cannot be lead by Gods spirite, & refuse to knowe the Scriptures: Neither can they truely serue him vntill such time as they knowe howe for to serue him: for God teacheth how he will be serued, and he teacheth only in his word: his wil is that we shal learne to know him by his word. And therfore he hath appointed the Ministry of the worde to continue for euer in his Church, that by it men may be built vp in Christ, as ye may

reade Ephe. 4. For this cause S. Paule exhorteth Timothy to be instant in teaching in season & out of season: he trauelled himselfe night and day, he maketh a very feruet prayer to God continually for the Collossians, that they might be fulfilled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisedome and spirituall vnderstanding. Collos. ver. 9. For this cause he exhorteth the Christians to be children in malice, but not to be children in vnderstanding. The holy Ghost doth sharpely reproue the Hebrewes as we may see, in the latter end of the 5. chap. of that Epistle: because they were yet children to be taught, when for the time they should haue bene teachers. Againe there is a notable sentence in the beginning of the second chap. of the Prouerbs, where a man may plainely prooue, that none can come to the feare of god, but such as do earnestly endeuour for to know God. The words be these My sonne if thou receiue my words, & hide my commaundements with thee, to incline thine eares to wisedom, & to bow thy hart to vnderstanding: if thou call for vnderstanding, and vtter thy voyce for knowledge: if thou seeke her as siluer, & digge for her as for hidde treasures: Then shalt thou vnder-

ſtand the feare of the Lorde ande find the knowledge of God. If a man doe not receiue the word and commaundementes of God vttered by his Miniſters, if he doe not keepe and lay them vp, if he do not cry and call vpon God for vnderſtanding if he doe not incline his eares & bend his heart therto, if he doe not ſearche and digge after her as men doe for treaſures: he ſhall not come to the knowledge of the feare of God.

Ath. **All men cannot come to theſe things which you ſpeake of.**

Zelot. All men which will pleaſe God muſt come thus farre, that they cā ſay with the Prophet Dauid in the 119. Pſalme, I haue hidden thy worde in my heart, that I might not ſinne againſt thee. Alſo in the ſame place when he hath asked the queſtion. Wherewithall a younge man ſhall cleanſe his wayes, he aunſweareth, by taking heede thereto according to thy worde whereby it is moſt euident, that all thoſe are vnpure in their wayes, and ſinne grieuouſly againſt God, which haue not made vp his worde in their heartes, nor cleanſed their wayes by the ſame,

But let vs come to ſome other of your ſayings, which I am grieued for to heare.

Ath. Ye neede not to be greeued, for I doe not hurt ye.

Zelot. I cannot but be greeued to ſee your groſſe and palpable blindneſſe: and I am the more grieued when I remember that many which are otherwiſe very wiſe men vſe much your doltiſh ſayinges, and thinke they ſpeake very wiſely. They ſay what ſhoulde vnlearned men meddle further then to ſay their ten commaundemẽts the Lordes prayer, and the Articles of the faith. And you are of the ſame minde.

Ath. I truſt to doe as well with theſe as other with all their learning.

Zelot. Doe ye thinke that ye ſhall doe well euen becauſe ye can ſay thẽ? although ye doe not vnderſtand them.

Ath. Nay if a man ſay them, and doe not vnderſtande them, he is litle the better I know we not why I ſhould not vnderſtande them; ſo long as God hath giuen me my fiue wittes: I am no childe, nor I am no foole.

Zelot. In deede he that hath one good wit, is no foole, much leſſe are you which haue fiue: you muſt needes know all and more,

more. For I thinke ye meane, that ye are able by reason to vnderstand those things.

Ath. **I trust I vnderstand by that reason which God hath giuen me, so much as is sufficient: I can tell when I do well, and I can tell when I doe euill.**

Zelot. I perceiue you are a fre wil man, one of those which thinke by naturall vnderstanding to conceiue the misteries of God: And ye doe in deede vnderstand so much as is sufficient: not for to saue ye, but as S. Paule sayth Rom. 1. to make ye without excuse: & so to cōdemne ye. You know some sinnes: and likewise ye can tell some things which are good, but ye can neuer tell any thing which ye haue done that is good.

Ath. **I trust GOD will be more fauourable then you are: and that he will not forgette the good deedes which I haue done.**

Zelot A verie litle box I warrant you will holde all your deedes, if ye haue no moe olde deedes then you haue good deedes.

Ath. **Are not these good deedes, when a man doth giue to the poore, and is ready to doe his neighbour a good turne? when a mā**

doth liue honestly, serue God, and thinke no man any harme.

Zelot. Now ye speake of cost: now ye are hit into your right vaine againe, euē where ye would be, to boast of those things which ye haue not: for none of all those or such like are good in you, because they doe not proceede of faith: for S. Paule saith Rom. 14 ver, 23. Whatsoeuer is not of faith is sinne.

Ath. Howe can ye proeue that mine are not of faith?

Zelot. Faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word Rom. 10. 17. where a man despiseth the worde, there cā be no faith: because faith is grounded vpon the word, and doth not belecue things contrary vnto the worde. Moreouer, they be not your fiue wits, (as you terme them) which can make ye able for to vnderstande the mysteries of Gods word. For they cannot be vnderstood as S. Paule teacheth. 1. Corinth. 2. 11. Vnlesse God reueale them by his spirite: for euen the wicked which seeme to know thē, do not know them aright. But let vs come for to see how well ye do vndestande the ten commaundements. Do ye not looke to come to heauen, by doing of them?

Ath. I doe them as nigh as God will

giue me grace, I trust God wil not require more at my hands then I am able for to do: I am as he made me? if he had made me able for to do better, I should do more.

Zelot. Now ye are in a deepe peece of diuinity: ye thinke this is so equal which ye vtter now, that al the Doctors in the world are not able for to controll ye. Ye say ye do what ye can, more God cannot require at your handes; you meane as if one shoulde make this comparison: a father canne require no more of his child then his strēgth will serue, a Prince can commaund his subiect no impossible thing: if a father should whippe his child for not doing that which he is not able, it were crueltie: if a Prince should put a subiect to death for not doing his commaundement in a matter vnpossible, it were tyranny: the father will say. My child did his good will I can aske no more: The Prince wil say he hath done that which a man might, and further I can not require Likewise you thinke God shoulde deale straightly with ye, if he should condemne ye for breaking the Law, which ye are not able to obserue: & that he cannot looke for more at your handes then he hath made ye

able to performe.

Ath. I meane so in deede, flesh is fraile, we can not doe all things.

Zelot. I pray ye tell me, doe ye thinke any shall goe to hell and be damned?

Ath. The Scripture saith there shall, doth it not?

Zelot. Wherefore doe ye thinke they shalbe damned?

Ath. For breaking Gods commaundements.

Zelot. Are they able for to keepe them?

Ath. No man is able for to keepe them.

Zelot. Shall they then be damned for euer in hell fire, for breaking those lawes which they were not able to keepe?

Ath. Not if they had done their good will: For then they coulde not be blamed.

Zelot. Howe the Diuell hath muffled you to keepe ye from seeing the daunger of eternall damnation which ye are in: haue ye neuer heard that which GOD sayth by Moses, which S. Paule citeth in the 3. chap. to the Galath. Cursed is euery one which abydeth not in all things which are

writ-

ten in the booke of the law for to do them: by which ye may see that GOD with his owne mouth doth lay his curse, which is damnation vppon euery one which doeth breake neuer so little of the lawe.

Ath. **GOD is merciſull, he is not ſo ſeuere as you woulde make him for to bee.**

Zelot. Doe ye not thinke that he is a iust and a true God?

Ath. **I must needes thinke ſo.**

Zelot. Do ye thinke that when he hath vttered his iustice, that he can by his mercy go from it, and so be founde vntrue? Nay there be many of ye which in all thinges crie God is merciſull, God is merciſull, which neuer consider with what conditions God hath promised mercy, neither how it maye stand with his iustice and trueth: ye thinke God offereth mercy without exception.

Ath. **If God be not merciſull, we are but in euill caſe.**

Zelot. He is a most merciſull and gratious God, but yet not vnto any, but such as he hath promised mercy. How many thousands there be, which are caried headlong to hell with this error, which not knowing

the iustice and truth of God, doe blesse them selues where God hath accursed thē. For these things which you haue now vttered, are euen of the principal reasons which Satan doth seduce men withall, and holde them from the truth. They thinke thus, I do what I can, God hath made me able to doe no better, God is mercifull, they know not this, that God made vs able in our first creation to keepe and obey his will wholly, and that although we can now keepe no part of it, yet he may iustly accurse and condemne vs vnto eternall fire, for transgressing any part of it: ye are not as he made ye, & therfore ye deceiue your selfe when ye thinke that he requireth no more at your handes, then ye are now able for to doe. Ye deceiue your selfe, when ye thinke that God can be mercifull vnto ye, and you liue without repentance.

Ath. **You would make a man dispaire, if ye would put him out of hope in the mercie of God.**

Zelot. I would not bring ye out of hope in the mercy of God, but I would bring ye out of your vaine hope, which is not that which will saue ye, but doth harden and blind ye vnto damnation.

Ath.

Ath. How can a mans hope and fayth in God, harden and blinde him vnto damnation: Now a dayes there is nothing among many of ye but damnation, damnation. It is well that God hath not giuen you power for to condemne men.

Zelot. If it were a true fayth, it must needes saue them, but being a faith which is blinde, it blindeth those which haue it, and hardneth them in their sinnes, and keepeth them from the seeking after the knowledge of Gods will, and stayeth them from returning home vnto God by true repẽtance, because it breadeth this in the hearts of men, to thinke and to say, we are wel ynough, we trust in Gods mercy, we beleeue as well as the best of them all: when as if they were ridde out of this notable snare of the Deuil, and brought for to see the wrath of God bent against them, they would then be glad with feare & trembling to seeke after the Lorde in his worde, and to be afraide to committe those thinges which might displease him. Where as nowe a man maye crye vntill he rende his thoate against their contempt of the Lordes word, and against their fowle sinnes, before he can mooue them at all: and why, be-

cause the deuill hath gotten thē within this fortresse: God is mercifull, God is mercifull. And for your other foolish wordes, that there is now nothing but damnation damnation: Do ye thinke that men are euer the sooner cast into damnation because they are tolde of the great daunger therof.

Ath. **I pray ye let me see what good can come therof.**

Zelot. If I should meete ye by the way and perceiue that ye were going into the way where ye should light among theeues, which would murther ye: which were most profitable for you, if I should tell ye, thus, ye be well, ye be well, or to shew ye that ye be in daunger of your life, if ye passe that waye?

Ath. **That were a wicked part for to let a man goe where he should loose his life and not for to tell him.**

Zelot. Wherefore doe ye not see then that those which do shew ye the daunger of damnation doe it for your profit, as well as they which teach ye to auoide some outward daunger. If a man tell ye thus, goe not that way, ye wil be robbed, ye wil be killed, doth it follow that he will robbe or kill ye: because ye say, men now vtter damnation,

and

and that it is well they haue not power to condemne men. And know this for certainty, that if God in his worde doth threaten damnation, and the Preacher do not shew it to the people, and teach them how to auoid the same, their blood shalbe required at his hand. But let vs come backe againe to the former matter to see how well ye vnderstād your x. commaundements. I would know this of ye, whether it be good for men to know the lawe, seeing it doth nothing but curse and condemne vs: if there were no lawe, there could be no sinne. I speake both of the law of nature, and of the lawe written, & if there were no sinne, there could be no condemnation: For this cause the law is called the ministerie of death and condemnation, and it is called the letter which killeth, 2. Corinth: 3. Seeing it doth worke all this, what profit can it bring for to know it, or why should it be preached?

Ath. I pray ye tell me you, for I am vnlearned, and you are learned. If it be as you say, I thinke it were good not to preach it? if it doe condemne vs.

Zelot. What a shame is it that a man of your age should haue so little skill, as not to know to what purpose the law serueth, It is

a token ye vnderſtand your x. commaundements wel. I will tell ye, when a man knoweth the law, it doth bring him to ſee that he is altogether corrupted with ſinne, both in body and ſoule, that he is vnder Gods heauie indignation and curſe: and that in himſelfe there is no helpe at all, it caſteth him into feare and terror of Gods iudgements, and ſo inforceth him to ſeeke for remedy in Chriſt. Whom before he did not greatly ſeeke after. For looke how a mã which doth not thinke himſelfe ſicke nor in daunger of ſickneſſe careth not for a Phiſition: ſo he which doth not know his damnable eſtate by the lawe, careth not for Chriſt: This is the cauſe why Chriſt ſaith: The whole need not the Phiſicion, but the ſicke; I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentaunce. Therefore to ſuch as haue wounded conſciences, the Goſpel is ſweete and comfortable: and Chriſt in the later ende of the eleuenth chapter of S. Mathew, calleth ſuch vnto him, ſaying: Come vnto me all ye which trauell and be heauie loden, and I will refreſh ye. But ſuch as haue no feeling of their ſinnes, or which are blinded and hardened, ye ſhall perceiue ſmall ioye and delight in them for to heare the word preaches:

ched: they had rather be at Bearebayting.

Ath. **Ye say well, I would I could remember your wordes.**

Zelot. There be many which will seeme to be desirous for to learne, but a man shall see, they continue euen as carelesse as before: But I will goe on with this matter. The Scripture sayth, that a sorowfull spirite is a sacrifice to God: and that God doth not despise the humble and contrite heart: But men are afraid to be brought to the knowledge and feeling of their sinnes for feare as they say, least they should be driuen into dispaire: as though that were a safe protection for them for a time to be in a sensleſse securitie: & as though they were in the better case, because they make no conscience of their sinnes. Wheras indeed those which are pricked and wounded with their sinnes, are in the way to repentance, whē the other are farre of.

Ath. **I could like your wordes the better, but that ye would haue men not to trust to their fayth: is it not good to beleeue well?**

Zelot. There is nothing good in men, vnlesse they beleeue well: and we cannot trust too muche vnto fayth: but you doe not vnderstand what fayth is. Tell

me this, doth fayth beleeue according as God ſetteth downe, and ſpeaketh in his worde, or doth it beleeue contrary to that which God vttereth?

Ath. **It doth not beleeue contrary to that which God vttereth.**

Zelot. Let vs ſee then, when God ſetteth downe & ſheweth which are the works of the fleſh, and threatneth damnation vnto all thoſe which walke in them: when God ſetteth down that the deſpiſers of his word ſhalbe condemned: and yet men which are defiled with the filthineſſe of the fleſh, and walke after their corrupt luſtes do boldely bragge that they beleue to be ſaued: & ſetting naught by Gods worde, ſay they truſt in God: is this fayth? God affirmeth one thing, and yet they beleue the contrary: but ſee the blindneſſe of men now a dayes, whē they heare vaine and brutiſh men boaſt of their fayth, ye doe well ſay they, to haue a good beliefe, when as in deed it is no more but a proud preſumption, wherwith God is highly diſplaiſed, becauſe by it they would make him a Lyar. When the ſonne of man commeth, ſhal he find fayth in earth? If this be fayth, he ſhall find great plenty of it euery where. For the Idolater, the ſwearer, the drun-

drunkard, the proud, the Adulterer, are as full of faith as they can be thrust. For euery one of these doth bragge that he hath as good a faith to god as he which is the most holy of all.

Ath. These may repent and be saued, or else God forbid.

Zelot. I doe not speake what God is able to doe in calling as he doth call some such vnto repentance: but what they haue in them presently. But I will see a litle further how great skill ye haue in the law of god, because ye needc so litle preaching. What say ye vnto the second commaundemēt is it lawful for a man to worship idols?

Ath. I thanke God I doe not worship any, for that is flatly forbidden.

Zelot. What say ye for the making of any image or picture of God, do ye thinke that is amisse?

Ath. For making it is no matter, so that a man haue no confidence in them.

Zelot. How do ye then vnderstand the words of the commaundement which say. Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any grauen image, &c.

Ath. He meaneth that we should not make any grauen Image to the intent to

worship it.

Zelot. That is your owne addition for there is no such exception expressed, neither can the order of the commaundement beare it: for he doth not say, Thou shalt not make to the entent to worship, but thou shalt neither make nor worship.

Ath. **If ye take it so, then why are Paynters allowed to make any picture, how is it lawfull to haue the image of the Prince in coyne?**

Zelot. I will shew ye your errour, you do not vnderstande that the law was deuided into two Tables, & that in the first Table, which hath 4. commaundements, there is nothing commaunded or forbidden, but that which respecteth immediatly the worship and honour of God, he medleth not with any ciuill or pollitike matter: he doth absolutly forbid to make as I may terme it any diuine image, any similitude for to represent God, or to be like him: because as the scripture sheweth, there cā no likenesse or similitude be made of God. For he is a spirite of glory, infinite, incomprehensible Which dwelleth in light, which none can come vnto: and therfore ye may read in the Epist. to the Ro: cap. 1. how horrible a sinne

it

it was to set vp any image or likenesse of God: therefore the pictures of the trinitie and such like are very abhominable. But to let this passe, what say ye for the worshipping of them: whether is it idolatrie, or not, if a man meane to worship God by the image, and not the image it selfe?

Ath. **How can that be idolatrie, when a man doth worship none but God, he knoweth that the image cannot helpe him.**

Zelot. Then your meaning is, that, vnlesse a man doe eitheir worshippe the very image it selfe, or else some false God in the image that it is no idolatrie?

Ath. **I see no reason to the contrary: and I thanke God I neuer was so foolish as to take a blocke or a stone for to be God.**

Zelot. Then ye thinke your selfe cleere in this commaundement, ye were neuer any idolater: ye neuer kneeled or prayed vnto any idoll?

Ath. **I haue kneeled before them, and praied before them, but I neuer tooke them to be God, neither did I pray vnto any, saue vnto the Lord God. I trust God will neuer charge me to be an idolater.**

Zelot. All you Atheists which haue no knowledge of God, are crammed as full of popish drosse as ye can hold, sauing that ye will not abide by it, but goe with the lawes of Princes, afraid to lose the world: because ye haue made the world your God.

Ath. **I defie popery as much as the best of ye all.**

Zelot. Euen as much as ye defie the deuel, whom ye serue dayly. For ye vse popish reasons to excuse your falling from god by Idolatrie, and wherby a man may easily see that you are readye vnto it againe if time serued.

Ath. **I see I must let ye aloone to iudge what ye lust.**

Zelot. Nay ye vse the very popish reasons: whereby they would proue when we charge them with the breach of this commaundement, that they do not commit idolatrie: for saie they, when the Scripture doth condemne that sinne, it is ment of such as worship fayned Gods, as the heathē men did, or such as do worship the image it selfe, and take it for to be God. But I will deale with ye by Gods word. What doe ye suppose of the children of Israel, when they came to Aaron, to haue him make them

Gods

Gods to goe before them, when Moſes taried ſo long in the mount: did they commit this great ſinne of idolatrie?

Ath. **They did commit idolatrie, and the booke ſayth they were deſtroied, a great number of them.**

Zelot. What? was their intent, to worſhip any beſides the true God?

Ath. **That it was, for they deſired Aaron for to make them Gods.**

Zelot. What thinke ye they tooke Aaron for to be, a man, or a God?

Ath. **That is a queſtion in deede: howe could they thinke him to be a God?**

Zelot. Did they thinke that Aaron being but a man had power for to make a God?

Ath. **If they thought ſo, they were but fooles.**

Zelot. And if you thinke they thought ſo, ye ſhall prooue no great wiſe man. For which way can a man perſwade any, that a mã can make a god? Or could they become more brutiſhe then a calfe, for to beleeue that the earerings of golde turned into the ſimilitude of a calfe, were nowe become God? No my friende it is very plaine that they meant no more but an image of God

and that which ſhould repreſent God, and put them in mind of him·ye muſt not think they were ſo fooliſh, although they were very fooliſh as the holy Ghoſt in one pſal. chargeth them, that they turned their glory into the ſimilitude of a calfe which eateth hay. This then is plaine enough, that they, meãt not for to worſhip the golden calfe it ſelfe, but God in the Calfe. Let us ſee then, did they meane for to worſhip any other by the calfe, beſides the true God:

Ath. **It ſeemeth they did, or els why ſhould they ſay Gods, for there is but one God.**

Zelot. Now ye are light vpon a very pore ſhift: for we may as well ſay. This is thy God O Iſrael, or make vs a God to go before vs. For the ſcripture it ſelfe, in the Hebrew tõgue, although it teach that there is but one God, yet ſpeketh of him in the plural number, and ſaith Gods, for excellencie or dignities ſake, as we ſee Princes here in the worlde when any of them ſpeaketh, he doth not ſay, I, but we, not my perſon, but our perſon. For the phraſe of the ſcripture, I might alleage diuers places, but you cannot vnderſtand, but in your owne tongue: neuertheleſſe I will cite one, it is in the Pſal Elohim Shophetim Hu: God is the iudge:

but

but the words are Gods, he is iudge.

Ath. Can you prooue that they meant to worship none but the true God?

Zelot. It is easie to be proued, both by the wordes of people them selues, when they say, these be thy gods O Israel which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: they meant not to change their God which brought them out from Pharao, and ledde them through the red Sea: neither did they thinke that the calfe which Aaron had made, was he which deuided the Sea, and drowned Pharao with his host, but they tooke it for an image of that God, and not of any feyned God, and also by the wordes of Aaron, when he sayth. To morrowe shalbe a feast to Iehouah, which name was neuer giuen to any, but to the God of heauen, at the least in those dayes, the God of Israel had that name peculier vnto himself. Thē ye may see, they worshipped not the Idol it selfe, but God in the Idol, they meant not to worship any false God but the God of heauē, which had deliuered them, & yet they did commit foule Idolatry & fel from God, in so much that God was exceeding wrath with them. Likewise in popery ye fel from God when ye bowed vnto images.

Ath. I hope not, because I did not as they did, they put a deuotion in it, I meant no suche thinge, but to be obedient to a lawe.

Zelot. Then your meaning is, that you kept your hearte and conscience to God, and went with your body but for fashion.

Ath. So long as I did keepe my conscience and heart to God, I trust I did well enough.

Zelot. Then you thinke God requireth not to be worshipped but with your soule & that you may serue the Diuel with your bodie. Ye thinke also that God doth not require the outwarde confession of the mouth, although it should be with losse of life.

Ath. Ye doe not heare me saye, that we may worshippe the Diuell with our bodies.

Zelot. You might heare your selfe say so, but that ye say ye know not wherefore herein ye are ignorant, that the worshippe of images is the worshippe of Diuels. But I knowe there be many trimme wise heads, which excuse the matter & clere thēselues this way, that they make no deuociō of the image, or any other thing in the seruice of the

the Pope, their conſcience is free to God, they ſerue and feare him, what doeth it hurt them, although they come outwardly with their body, vnto the other: what ſhould they in danger thēſelues in ſo ſmall a matter? But will ye heare me what I can ſay out of Gods word againſt you, and ſuch fellowes?

Ath. **I will heare you gladlie, I am not ſo wilful, as not to heare.**

Zelot. There were amongſt the Corinthians, diuers Chriſtiās which were perſwaded that it was a matter indifferent to goe to the Idole temple, and there to ſit at the feaſt with the infidels, which they made in honour of the Idole, & to eate of the meate which had beene ſlaine in ſacrifice vnto the Idole. They excuſed the fact in this wiſe, that they had knowledge, they vnderſtood well that the Idole was not God, they went not ofanie deuotion at all, as touching the worſhip and ſeruice which the heathen men did vſe, but for friendſhip and neighbourhood ſake, they woulde not refuſe to eate with ſuch as were their kinsfolkes or acquaintance. Nowe although S. Paul doth mildlie deale with them, and aunſwereth their reaſons in the 8. and 9. chapter: yet in the 10. chap. he dealeth verie roughlie with them,

ſetting before them the terrible example of Gods wrath vpon Idolaters, and ſheweth plainly, that they were partakers of the table of diuels, & that they drank of the cup of diuels, howſoeuer they thought they kept thē ſelues, & their conſciences free and vnpolluted. Euen ſo I conclud, that theſe worldlings which vſe this ſhift, how litle deuotion ſoeuer they haue, yet they haue no leſſe then the Corinthians had in the Idole feaſt, therefore, when S. Paul affirmeth, that they committed idolatrie, it muſt needes follow that theſe do much more.

Ath. **Wel, if the matter be heard, that it be an offence, I truſt God will forgiue vs.**

Zelot. It is your manner although a ſinne be neuer ſo foule, yet to make ſmal account of it, but like a dogge, that is wounded, yee thinke yee can by this meanes licke your ſelues whole, if ye can but ſay, I hope God will forgiue vs.

Ath. **If you ſay true, then al our forefathers ſhould be condemned, becauſe they did worſhip images. I doubt not but God was as mercifull vnto them, as he is vnto men now: I thinke they pleaſed God better then we doe nowe: let vs not ſtande ſo much in our owne light.**

Zelot.

Zelat. It is a meruellous thing for to ſee, how the diuell doth dazle mens eyes, & how he doeth bewitch them. Theſe thinges which you vtter, and ſuch like, are euen like a vaile before your eyes, ſo that yee are not able for to haue anie ſight into Gods word. Howe groſſe and doltiſh ſo euer the matter be, if ye can ſay thus, our forefathers did it, wil ye condemne thē, then al is ſafe enough. But ſee howe ye are ouerſeene, all our forefathers did not fall from God by idolatrie, for euen in the pride of the reigne of Antichriſt, there were ſome ſtood vp againſt him, in diuers countries. There were alwaies ſome whō God lightened to ſee the abhominatiōs of the man of ſin, & ſo to repent & take hold of Chriſt: & god who is alwaies like himſelf receiued them to mercie. And doubtles God is more now diſpleaſed with ſuch as do now wilfully kicke and ſpurne againſt the truth, and ſeek for to quench the glorious light of the goſpel, then he was with thē, from whō the worde of God was taken away, & being blinde, they were made for to beleeue euery lie, and therefore nowe when God offereth his grace, and ſeeketh by his word to expel that groſſe darkenes, it were good for ſuch as you, not to ſtande in your owne

light, and obstinatelie to refuse the knowledge of GOD. Our forefathers had that great plague came vpon them which S.Paul did foretell, 2. Thes.2. Namely, that there shoulde bee a falling awaie, that Antichrist shoulde deceaue the world, and bring them to damnation: for God (hee saith) shoulde sende them strong delusion, euen for to beleeue lies, because they receaued not the loue of the trueth, that they might be saued: and nowe when God offereth his worde againe, men doe not ioyfully & thankfully embrace it, and therefore God doth send them shepeheards euen after their heartes desire: not to feede them (for they cannot) but to fleese the for that they can skill off: not to bee salt for to season them, but to bee euen like doung cast vppon them for to corrupt them: not to giue them light, seeing themselues are blind. The greatest number of you are as farre from God, as they were euen in the blindest time of Poperie, and that is confessed by your owne mouth, when ye saie yee woulde follow our forefathers: For ye meane not those Forefathers which did know and worship God aright, but those which were seduced, and fell from him by Idolatrie. I am verie loth for to question with you any further in

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the commandementes, yee are ſo exceeding blinde in them. For I know that in our land, let al the people be numbred, and fiue partes of yee doe vnderſtand ſo much in the commaundements, Lords prayer, and articles of the faith, that it were a greate ſhame for a godly man to haue a childe of x. yeeres olde for to know no more.

Ath. **How can yee tell that? I think ye goe beyond your booke, haue yee poſed all?**

Zelot. I goe not ſo farre beyonde my booke, as you thinke I doe. And although I haue not poſed al, yet I haue poſed ſo many, that I knowe what the ſtate of the moſt is. This I finde that in the beſt and moſt religious townes generally, the greateſt part haue verie litle zeale. This I find, that where there is one of theſe townes which are forward, there bee fiue which are not, becauſe they want teaching. This further I knowe by experience, that thoſe which are the willing ones, and as it were the daylie hearers for a long time are verie raw when they bee examined. The iudg you what is in ẏ reſt, which are verie ſeldome taught, or refuſe for to be taught: and if this be not true, let mee looſe my hand. And yet there be idle bellies, which are not aſhmed with open mouth to crie

that lesse preaching woulde serue, and that there is knowledge enough among the people: when the poore people doe not vnderstand so much as the Lords praier: vnlesse they would hold them still in poperie, they can be no more ignorant.

Ath. I coulde like the better, if the preaching might be only vpō the sabboth day: but nowe they run in the weake dayes, & leaue their busines, & begger themselues: they go to other townes also, which is a pitie that it is suffered: it is a great disorder.

Zelot. He is said to be blessed, which hath his delight in the lawe of the lord, & which doth meditate therin day & night. I confesse that ỳ sabboth day is the chiefe time to seeke for knowledge. But that man which hath so litle loue to the word, that he cannot bestow one houre in a weeke for to heare it, & yet can bestowe diuers houres in vaine talking, drinking, and gaming, is but a dull scholler vpon the sabboth day: I warrant ye, if a man looke wel vnto him, he shall find it harde to iudge whither he or the seat he sat on, carried away most: & for leauing their busines so far as they may conueniently, would yee haue them forget ỳ precept of our sauiour Christ, first seeke ỳ kingdome of God, & his righteousnes, & thē al these things shal be cast vpō

you

you? The soule with you is lesse to bee cared for, the ỳ body: ye prefer this life before eternall life: & as for this, ỳ men come for to be beggers by following sermōs, ỳ they sel their kine, & that they are faine to be gathered for in the Church: ye haue a bowget ful of these lies, and ye need but euen a mill for to grinde them. They are taught by ỳ word preached, to follow their labors painfully, & the blessing of God is vpon mens labours, which do seeke him and the knowledge of his worde: and although it somtime doth hinder them one houre, yet it saueth them and gaineth them many houres, which they were wont to bestow vainely.

Ath. **I doe not like this so euill as ỳ other when they runne from towne to towne so disorderly.**

Zelot. I pray yee tel mee if there were a dearth of corne, howe far woulde ye goe to fetch corne, rather then starue? I beleeue, as farre as the sonnes of Iacob, when they went out of the land of Chanaan into Egypt.

At. **I cōut him a foole, which wil not go a gret way of to buy his corne, rather then starue.**

Zelot. He is a starke foole, which wil not go a gret way rather thē starue his body: but he is a foole which wil not once step out at his

for to seeke the euerlasting foode of his soule.

Ath. **Those are not alike, wee must needes seeke for to liue.**

Zelot. No, you cannot see them for to bee alike: you see well in thinges of this world, but for heauenlie things, yee see nothing: but to come to the matter, it is great pitie indeede, that there should be such disorder, as that men shoulde run from towne to towne to heare sermons: Our Sauiour Christ pitied them when they came into the wildernesse for to heare him, because hee saith, they were as sheepe without a shepehearde. But you and your mates are not grieued with the same pitie: yee are as like a malicious dogge as can be, which lyeth vppon the hay, and will eate none, neither wil suffer the Oxe which woulde. Woe bee vnto yee Scribes and Pharisies, yee Hypocrites, yee shut vp the kingdome of heauen before men, yee enter not in your selues, neither doe ye suffer those which would enter. Mat. 23.14.

Ath. **You say they goe to seeke foode for their soules, and to learne for to know God: but they doe it of vaine glorie.**

Zelot.

Zelot. There be alwaies ſome no doubt, which doe not ſeeke of a ſyncere minde but of vaine glorie, and doe abuſe their knowledge, and are vainelie puffed vp in themſelues, with an opiniõ of thoſe things which are not in them: but will you giue ſentence againſt all, becauſe ſome are ſuch? Is this a good argument? men giue almes for vaine glorie, men come to the Church, and pray of vaine glorie: Therefore almes and prayer are to bee left: for doubtleſſe ſome doe thoſe thinges for vaine glorie, euen as our Sauiour Chriſte accuſeth the Scribes and Phariſies.

Ath. **But Chriſt biddeth vs doe thoſe thinges. Howe will yée prouc that we are commaunded to do this?**

Zelot. I knowe no place which hath in plaine wordes, Goe vnto other countries or townes for to heare preaching, and whie? becauſe the will of God is, that they ſhould haue preachers come home vnto them, and be appointed ouer them for to feede them. I might alleadge examples of good men which ſought after Chriſt, whom he did not forbid. Doe ye thinke when the Lorde commaundeth vs to ſeeke him ſo earneſtlie, and that in the myſterie of his Goſpel, that a few

miles ought for to ſtop vs. How farre thinke ye men run for a littile earthly ſubſtance? How far do they runne on heapes, both men & womē, vnto feaſts, maygames, dauncings, plaies, bearebatings, and other ſuch vanities?

Ath. **Youth will be doing, ye muſt not blame them, they haue time enough to bee holy hereafter. I haue had as great delight my ſelf ere now in thoſe things as one, but nowe I ware olde.**

Zelot. I was ſure yee would allow this kinde of running from towne to towne, this is no diſorder at al: howe many are there of ye, which crie out with open mouth, againſt ſuch as ſeeke after the worde, and ſeeke for to trouble & puniſh thē for ſo doing, which once open your mouth againſt theſe foule abuſes? Whereas ye ſay, youth will be doing, ye ſay true, and ſo wil many aged likewiſe, but doth it follow therefore that they muſt be ſuffered to do the things which are euill? In that yee ſay, they haue time enough to be holy hereafter, therein ye ſhew your ſelfe to be a right worldling, a very epicure, an ignorant man: for thus your worldly Epicures doe ſpeake, youth will haue their race, let them alone, what ſhoulde yong men and maides doe with the ſcriptures? cleane contrary

trarie vnto that which God ſpeaketh by his Prophet. Wherewithall ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? euen by taking heede thereto according to thy worde. Likewiſe by Salomon in the booke of Eccleſiaſtes chap. 11. Remember thy creator in the dayes of thy youth. But now a daies it is a principal point of diuinitie, that youth may walke after the luſtes of the fleſhe, ſo long vntill through cuſtome of ſinning, they are ſo beſotted and hardened in their wicked luſtes, & their cōcupiſcences are growen ſo ſtrong, that there can no grace enter into them, & ſo it ſeemeth for to be with you, for I dare warrāt, you are able to tel a long tale of your youth trickes.

Ath. **Well, I am as I am, you cannot make me better, & I truſt ye ſhall make me no worſe. Ye ſpeake as though none couldе be good but ſcripture men.**

Zelot. None can be good but ſuch as feare God, ſuch as ſeeke for to obey him: None feare God, which ſet light by his ordinances and caſt them behinde their backes: None can obey God, but ſuch as doe ſeeke for to knowe and followe thoſe preceptes which hee vttereth in his worde. None are godlie, but ſuch as are cleanſed, and guide their wayes by the worde. Hee which is of

of God heareth Gods word.

Ath. **If they bee so good and godlie, how commeth it to passe then, that there is so much debate among them? for I knowe townes my selfe, which are euen deuided one part against another, since they had a preacher, which were not so before. This they gaine, that whereas before they loued together, nowe there is dissention sowne among them.**

Zelot. Nowe ye discharge your greatest ordinance: I trowe yee haue nowe paide it home: It is harde if Satan cannot with this engine ouerthrowe and beate downe preaching. But I pray you tell mee, can yee put fire and water together but they will rumble? Will yee haue light and darkenesse for to agree as companions together?

Ath. **What is this to the matter?**

Zelot. Woulde yee haue God and the Diuell agree together? woulde yee haue the godlie and the wicked for to be at one? this yee must doe, yee looke where the fault is to be laide.

Ath. **I thinke the fault must needes be layde vppon the preaching, because they agreed before that came.**

Zelot. If

Zelot. If their agreement together before had beene good, then no doubt the preaching that ſhould breake it, could not be good: for one good thing cannot deſtroy another. But the former peace was not in GOD, but in the fleſhe: neither was it ſo great as you would ſeeme for to ſet it forth, becauſe that the worldlinges are alwayes at ſtrife, and one readie for to cut anothers throate: but yet their hatred is ſo exceeding great againſt the Goſpell, that in reſpect of the minde, which theie carrie towardes the profeſſors thereof, they ſeeme among themſelues to bee at peace, and one to loue and make much of an other.

Ath. **Where is the fault then for to be layde?**

Zelot. Vpon the wicked which fret and rage againſt the world, becauſe it laieth open and diſcloſeth their filthineſſe, and bewrayeth them. For the light (as S. Paul ſaith) doth manifeſt all things. They pretend other excuſes, as though they hated the profeſſors for ſome euill conditions: but this is very euidēt, a blinde man may almoſt diſcerne it, that ſo long as a man is voyde of religion, & maketh profeſſion of no more then they, ſo long, although he be full, and ſwarme with

great

greate vices, hee is an honest man, but let him follow the worde, and be carefull for, to amende, then there is not a lewder fellow vppon earth, diuerse slaunders shall be raysed, thinges shall bee reckoned vp which he did 7. yeares agone: and nowe they hate him like a dogge. Light is come into the worlde, and men loue darkenes more then light, because their workes be euill. Will yee charge Christ and his Gospel, because as he saith, he came not to sende peace, but a swoorde, to set the father against the sonne? Math. 10. Or will yee laye the blame vppon those which loue the light? Will ye blame S. Paul and his preaching because there was stir and hurley burelie almost wheresoeuer he came? Was he to be blamed, or the wicked infides, which coulde not abide to haue their sinnes reproued?

Ath. **There be some places where they haue graue and learned preachers, and yet there is no such contention in their parishes: I like that well.**

Zelot. You like that well: so doeth your maister also.

Ath. **What meane you by that? whome doe ye call my master?**

Zelot. Euen the Diuell, for hee is content

rent those preachers shoulde ride vppon his backe, because he is sure they will not spure-gall him: they be verie gentle riders. Doe ye not thinke, that if they should set foorth Gods worde as they ought, and spread the light: that al wicked men (of which their parishe are full) would storme and fret against them? the Diuell himselfe woulde fiske about, if they shoulde spurre him but a little. But they can tel a smooth tale in the pulpit, garnished with some mery story, for to make the people merrie: or else some olde rotten allegorie: or some farre fetched matter out of some great writers, that the people may be at their wits ende, and admit them. A mã woulde thinke to see the people come out of the Church blowing, that they were fed as ful as tickes: when they go home with emptie bellies. This I dare warrant, if it bee not so, let me lose both mine eares, that goe thorow the parishes of these graue and learned diuines, and except such as runne to fetche their victuals other where, yee shall not find fiue among fiuescore which are able to vnderstande the necessarie groundes and principles of religion: and yet the people will say they be excellent deepe men: But I loue not those Welles whiche are so deepe
that

that a man can drawe no water out of them.

Ath. I see you like better of young rash heades, and troublesome fellowes, then yee doe of graue stayed men: for nowe a dayes there are a number which take vpon them to preach, which in deede do but prattle: and for my part, I will beleeue none of them: but I will rather giue credite to that which ancient learned men do speake.

Zelot. I do vtterly mislike, that any rash head shoulde haue the office of preaching, which is a thing of so great dignitie, as to be the mouth of God vnto the people, to vtter the counsels and mysteries of the Lord, and to teach them the way to saluation: and great dishonour to God and his Gospell it is, if there be many such as you say there be: but if they be godly, learned, graue, discrete, and wise, and doe faithfully and zealously dispose the manifold mysteries of God, the the matter is not whether they bee young or olde: for the doctrine which they doe teach and expounde, is not their owne, but the doctrine of Christ, the authoritie is not of them, but of God which hath giuen it. But I knowe your meaning: you count all those to be ignorant, and to prattle, which

doe

doe not preach according to your humor, ſuch as doe ſharpelie inueigh againſte your vanities: and thoſe which doe not, they bee learned and graue men, let vs beleeue them: and ſo yee looke not what God ſaith, but what men ſaie: and ſurely thoſe kinde of graue men doe great hurt: I meane ſuch as carrie a great ſhewe of learning in them, and ſcarce anie are the better for it.

Ath. And ſurely I thinke they do much good.

Zelot. You thinke they doe much good: but I knowe they doe verie much hurt: the blind and vnlearned Miniſters are hurtfull, thoſe which are popiſh prieſtes doe hurte, they which followe euill vices, as drunken Miniſters, ſwearers, quarrellers, Adulterers, gameſters & ſuch like do hurt, but yet theſe which you ſpeake of, doe more hurte: I will tell you howe, where there is ſuch an one as thoſe aboue named, the people haue no great opinion of them, for they can eaſilie ſaie, alas our miniſter is not able nor meete for to teach vs, and ſo they are willing to heare and to bee informed by others: but thoſe which haue one of your profounde Clearkes, the people ſo much hang vppon him, that they will heare none other: This

they ſaie, our preacher is as profound a man as any of them all: if we were out of the way, hee would tell vs, if ſo much teaching were needfull, woulde not he teach vs? if ſuche thinges were euill, woulde he vſe them? and ſo they conclude, that they care not for learning ought ſauing at his mouth, when as indeed he teacheth them litle or nothing, peraduenture he giueth them a colde collation once a moneth, and when a man ſhall take the proofe of them, he ſhall finde that they are no better then ſuch as haue a dumbe Idol to their ſhepeheard.

Ath. **Is it not better for to haue a ſermon now and then, and to haue it a learned ſermon: then for to haue many without learning? I thinke one ſuch ſermon doeth more good thē an hundreth of thoſe flying ſermōs.**

Zelot. I graunt thus much, that ỳ word of God is to bee handled with great care, men are not to ſteppe foorth and to ſpeake raſhlie, and without ſure and vndoubted knowledge of the thinges which they vtter. Moreouer, there ought to bee ſuch learning and diſcretion, as ſhall bee ſufficient to open and to manifeſt the power and dignitie of the word vnto the conſciences of the hearers: he muſt be able for to make plaine

the

the sense of the scriptures, and hee must applie it to the hearers which doth preach. For to handle the holie mysteries of God vnskilfully, is a vice greatly to be condemned, and I thinke such, although they preach neuer so often, shall doe but litle good. But I pray you let me knowe which you count a learned sermon: and which ye call a flying sermon?

Ath. **That is a learned sermon, when the Preacher doth lay open the matter learnedlie.**

Zelot. You meane when hee is able to speake much latine, and to alleadge al sortes of writers.

Ath. **I count those learned fellowes indeed, I will not giue a button for these English Doctors, which can alleadge no more but out of Paul and Peter.**

Zelot. It woulde be a notable learned sermon then, if the Preacher should speake all latine.

Ath. **Then wee which doe not vnderstande latine shoulde be neuer the better.**

Zelot. If so litle coulde pleasure you, then no doubt a whole sermon would edifie ye much. But such vayne men as you,

doe ſhew your vanitie, when ye looke more after thoſe thinges which ſhould feede your eares, then for to haue your ſoules conuerted. Is that to be vſed which cannot edifie at all, but ſerueth for a vaine ſhewe, and diſturbeth the minde and memorie of the diligent hearer? But let this goe, and let vs ſee the other, for alleadging of writers, in this matter ye haue ſundrie graue men of your ſide, which count thoſe ſermons learned, which are ſet foorth with all ſortes of auctorities, and thoſe which bring the bare worde out of the Bible, they make but verball Sermons: But doubtleſſe they may ſhew ſome grauitie in their bearde, for there is none in the matter.

Ath. **Are they not thereby knowne for to bee learned men? euerie Plowe man nowe a dayes canne alleadge out of Saint Paul.**

Zelot. They are thereby knowne for to be vnskilfull men, and ſuch as are not rightly inſtructed in the doctrine of S.Paul. They make a great ſhew of learning and yet want the knowledg of the dignitie of gods word. When as they bring in the ſayings of Plato, and Ariſtotle, as fellowes and companions with the oracles of God vttered by his Prophetes

phetes and Apostles, and as though there were greater & deeper matter in those, then in the Bible, whereas al the heauenly mysteries and counsels of God are vttered, they sticke not to count that vnlearned which is brought from thence: and great learning to bee in the sayinges of the other. For this cause they doe also seeke for to garnish their sermons, and as it were for to set them with pearle, when as in effect they do nothing else, but as if a man shoulde mingle leade with pure gold, and claye with precious oyle. And because yee speake of learning, tel me what ye thinke, whether Saint Augustine or Saint Paule, was the better learned.

Ath. **You shoulde aske that question of such as are learned: would yee haue me tell yee?**

Zelot. Is not hee which doth alleadge sentences out of Augustine, Ambrose, Hierome, & Cyprian, better learned then they which aleage out of Moses, Esay, Peter, Paul, or Iohn?

Ath. **I tolde ye before that euery man can alleadge out of these, & if I could reade, and had a Bible, I coulde doe it also: but to alleadge out of the other, none can doe that,**

but such as are great Clearkes.

Zelot. Then it seemeth that they were better then Paul, and Peter, or Moses, or else why should they bee esteemed to be better learned which doe cite them?

Ath. If I might shoot my bolt, I thinke they were the learneder, because their writinges are so profounde.

Zelot. I would you did thinke so alone, but in deede the people haue beene so deluded with such as would make a shew of learning, that multitudes are of your minde, which bringeth in a vile and shamefull abasing of the most holy and sacred Bible. But let mee aske yee certaine questions. Doe yee not thinke that if the writinges of those men were to be redde in our tongue, that euerie man then coulde bee able to alleadge out of them, as they doe out of the Bible?

Ath. I thinke they might then be able.

Zelot. Doe yee suppose those shoulde by and by bee esteemed for to bee learned, which doe then alleadge sayinges out of them?

Ath. I see no cause why then they should not be counted so.

Zelot.

Zelot. Is he learned in the Bible, which can alleadge manie sentences?

Ath. **A man may speake much & know little.**

Zelot. You might see likewise that men may alleadge sayinges out of great Doctors, and yet themselues be grett Dawes: for hee is learned whom God doth teach for to vnderstand the heauenly mysteries vttered by the Prophetes and Apostles: and in vttering them, doth followe the steppes of Paul and the rest. The Doctors had all their true learning out of the Bible: for in it is set foorth that wisedome whiche is aboue all.

Ath. **The scriptures are darke & harde, and therefore men nowe doe not vnderstande them as the Doctors did. And for this cause, I haue heard preachers say, they are to be vouched.**

Zelot. Those Preachers might haue beene wiser, then for to maintaine two so grosse opinions: The first, accusing the scriptures of such darknesse, as though they coulde not bee vnderstoode, whereas indeed in the principall and most necessarie pointes, the Lorde hath spoken so clearly, that verie simple men maie bee taught for to see the

plaine euidence of the worde. The other deprieth the Church of the true interpreter of the worde, which is the ſpirite of God, as though ý Lord did not now giue ſuch gifts as he gaue to thoſe Doctors: which is a popiſh opinion alſo: for ſo long as God giueth his worde to the Church, ſo long he giueth the interpreter of the ſame, although not in all ages alike: but whoſoeuer is not blinde, maie eaſilie ſee, that in this age there bee as great giftes beſtowed vppon the Church, as euer were in any, ſince the time of the Apoſtles.

Ath. **Then you are one of thoſe which deface the olde Fathers, when ye will not allowe them for to bee cited in the Sermons. To what vſe then ſhoulde men reade them?**

Zelot. That is a verie falſe accuſation: ſhoulde a man bee accuſed for defacing the honour of the Lord Chauncellour, becauſe he woulde denie him the dignitie and honor of the prince? Likewiſe ſhal a man bee ſaide for to iniurie or deface the Doctors, becauſe hee will not giue them the dignitie which doeth belong vnto God alone? The Preacher is the mouth of God vnto the people, and not the mouth of men: hee is not for

to vtter doubtfull matter and vncertaine, but such as maie be most euident. He must saie, and proue euen vnto the conscience of the hearer, thus God speaketh, and thus hee meaneth. He cannot say Augustine saith it, therefore God saith it, Augustine saith it, therefore it is vndoubtedly true: for Augustine might and did erre manie waies. But he maie saie, Saint Paul saith it, therefore God himselfe saith it, S. Paul saith it, therefore it is vndoubtedly true: for looke what he saith, or anie other Apostle, Euangelist or Prophet, God hath set it downe, by them, it is his, and not theirs: they are but the instrumentes which he vsed for to vtter & penne his wil, his spirite in them ruled the whole in this case, so that they did not, nor coulde not erre: nowe when the Preacher doeth laie open their saying, not he, nor they, but God speaketh: as they were the mouth of God for to set it downe, so is hee nowe againe the mouth of G O D, for to recite and declare it.

Ath. The worde of God is certaine and sure, because God cannot lie, but how shall I knowe which is the true sense of it? shall I beléeue euerie man which doth interpret the worde? shal I not the better beléeue him

if

If he say it is not my interpretation, but S. Ierome he saith so, S. Augustine he saith so. I promise yee, he shall haue the greater credite with me, for they were other maner of men then hee.

Zelot. I cannot but maruell to see howe grosse and dul your head is for to learne the trueth, and howe redilie you can bring out such matters as this: ye speake not of your owne head. I woulde there were no greater learned men then you blinded in this matter. But let mee showe yee your grosse error: Ye say the worde is certaine and sure: but the interpretation thereof yee make doubtfull: but what are we the better that the worde of God is sure and certaine, vnlesse it be sure & certaine vnto vs, which cannot bee except the interpretation be so? It is as good for you to say the word is doubtful, as for to say the sense is doubtfull: Nowe when as yee hang the sense vpon men, can yee denie but that still it is in doubt. This must needes arise in the minde, those doctors sayd so, but they might erre, and therefore I am not certaine that this is the sense. If this shall bee admitted in the Church, what shall become of that πληροφορία, or full certayntie of faith, which the worde of GOD doeth require

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to be in vs, it is grounded vpon the word of God, for it cannot ſtande otherwiſe.

Moreouer, faith is ſure what God meaneth, or elſe it is no faith: therefore ſuch as woulde hang mens faith vpon the authoritie of men, where they muſt needes ſtil be in doubt, and when they are at the furtheſt, they come but vnto this, it is verie like for to be true, becauſe ſuch notable men ſpeake it, doe not knowe a right what faith is, for that ye ſaie, he ſhal haue the more credite with you, if hee ſay, It is not my ſaying, but the ſaying of Auguſtine: therein ye were euen as good ſay, that your faith is built vpon men, and not vpon God. For if yee doe beleeue, becauſe ſome great learned or godlie man telleth ye the matter, this is no true beleefe, for wee muſt bee fully perſuaded that God himſelfe doeth tell vs, or elſe we bee neuer the neere.

Ath. **Howe ſhall I know when God ſpeaketh, or which God ſpeaketh? you come and preach one way, another commeth and he doeth preach another way, yée preach one contrary to another: you ſay God ſpeaketh, hée ſaith God ſpeaketh, which ſhall wée beléeue? Is not hée to be beſte beléeued, which can ſhew ý thoſe great doctors**

are

are on his side.

Zelot. See what a grounde you leane vnto, you know not when GOD speaketh, nor what God speaketh: and therefore yee wil haue some of the old Doctors for to tell: are ye sure hee telleth yee right? if yee bee, it is because he sheweth ye the worde of God, why he telleth ye so, the credite must bee giuen vnto the word, & not to the man. But you saie yee can not tell when one doeth alleadge the worde in the true meaning, howe then, can ye tel when one alleadgeth the doctor in the true meaning? hee which wil falsifie the word of god in the Bible, he wil not sticke for to falsifie the meaning of the Doctor: you maie search the scriptures, to see whether the testimonies alleadged be so, as the men of Berea did, when Paul preached, Act. 17. 11. You cannot, neither are yee commaunded for to search the doctors. And vnlesse ye see the manifest auctoritie of gods worde, ye are not bound for to beleeue, but if it be plainlie shewed, that God hath spoken, then ye are bounde vnder the paine of damnation, for to giue credite vnto it. Christ saith, My sheepe, heare my voice, a straunger they will not heare. Iohn 10. Also S. Iohn saith, brethren, beleeue not euerie

spirit

ſpirite, but try the ſpirites, whether they be of God 1. Iohn 4. he therefore which ſayth, I cannot tell when the voyce of Chriſt is vttered, it is all one as if he ſhoulde ſay, I am none of the ſheepe of Chriſt, becauſe (as he ſayth) Euery one of his ſheepe doe knowe his voyce. He that ſayth, I knowe not which preacher doth preach trueth, and which falſhoode, he may euen as well ſay, I am none of thoſe, to whom the holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh, and ſaith: Trie the ſpirites whether they bee of God, it is a general precept giuen vnto al Chriſtians.

Ath. **Ye ſhall neuer make me beléue that euerie man is for to iudge, whether the Preacher ſpeake true or falſe.**

Zelot. I knowe not what I ſhall be able for to make you beleeue, but I am ſure I can plainely ſhew what yee ought to beleeue. Firſt, marke this, the word came not from man, neyther can a man teach it yee, vnleſſe God reueale it by his ſpirite: if it were the wiſedome of the world, or of the fleſh, then the ſpirite of the world which is in man & knoweth the ſecretes of man, coulde teache it: but becauſe it is the miſterie of GOD, none can make yee learne it, but the holy Ghoſt, which ſearcheth euen the deepe

thinges

things of God, as S. Paul teacheth. 1.Cor.2. 10. Saint Iohn in his first Epistle, Chapter the second, hauing told them that there were euen then many Antichristes, he comforteth them with this. You saith he, haue receaued an annointing from the holy one, & know al thinges. Like as therefore none of those can learne, whom God doth not illighten with his spirit: so on the contrarie parte all those which are taught within by the spirit, doe feele when the doctrine which the same spirite hath taught, is vttered: hee knoweth his owne, and he sealeth it vp in their hearts and consciences, which being instructed by him, must needes consent thereto fullie. For this cause there is great differenee betweene such as set all vpon the authorities of men, and such as preach, as S. Paule saith hee did with the plaine euidence of the spirite, and of power. 1.Cor. 2. 4. hee addeth the reason in the next verse, that their faith should not consist in the wisedome of men, but in the power of God. If faith may not hang vpon the wisedome of men, and therefore ỹ intising speech which mãs wisedom teacheth, is to be auoided in setting forth the gospel, thẽ can it not stand vpon the authorities of men

Ath. Is it not lawfull in any respect for

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to alleadge them?

Zelot. Yes, no doubt there are circumstances, which may make it sometime very needfull. I speake only against this, that they are alleadged when as we may alleadge the same thinges out of the worde it selfe. And when they are alleadged, for men to builde their faith vpon, or to make men think that there can be no certeinty in the interpretatiō of the word, but where as they are made for to speak. When as indeed the preacher in his sermon must come with such euidence and make his proofe so plaine and so strong, that it must needes conuince the conscience of ẏ hearers, in such wise that of necessitie he shal be forced for to say, vndoubtedly that which this man vttereth, is that which God himself speaketh: for so saith the Apost. 1. Cor. 14. 24 If, saith he, al doe prophesie, and there come in an infidell, or one vnlearned, he is reproued of all, he is iudged of all: & so the secrets of his heart are made manifest, and falling vpon his face, he wil worship God, confessing that God is verily among you. This testimonie doth shew that the force of Gods word vttered nakedly is such, ẏ it conuicteth the hart of ẏ infidell, & compelleth him for to confesse ẏ God is with them which speak it.

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The word of God is deſcribed in the Epiſtle to the Hebrewes chap. 4. 12. after this ſort: the worde of God (ſaith hee) is liuely and mightie in operation, ſharper then anie two edged ſwoord, and entereth in vnto the deuiding aſunder of the ſoule and the ſpirit, of the iointes and the marrowe, and is a diſcerner of the thoughtes and intentes of the heart. Men might vnderſtande by this, that by whomſoeuer this ſworde of the ſpirit be drawne foorth, if it bee rightly handled, it will pearce through, and through both the bodies and ſoules of the hearers, and will moue euerie veine in the heart, euen of the wicked. So that he needeth not for to grind it, or make it ſharpe vpon the grindſtone of Ambroſe or Hierom.

Ath. Then you deſtroy learning, if ye take awaye the writings of the Doctors, for they ſerue to no vſe: if it be as you ſay, why ſhould ſtudents read them?

Zelot. There is great benefite in the reading of them, for to helpe vs to the true vnderſtanding of the ſcriptures.

Ath. If they helpe yée to vnderſtand the ſcriptures, wherefore do yée not whē ye expound the ſcriptures, tell which is theirs? Yée robbe them, and take the glorie to your

ſelues

selues.

Zelot. Nowe yee reason as bussardlike as can be, yee may be a Doctor of Dunces, for this argument. Doth the Preacher come in his owne name, must he tell his owne will, or is he to seeke his owne glorie or the glory of any other man? If other haue holpen him to finde the knowledge of Gods will, which he must vtter, is it therefore become theirs, because they haue shewed it vnto him: If he nowe set it foorth in the name of the Lord alone, whose it is, doth he robbe them? For looke whatsoeuer a man findeth in the auncient writers in expounding, he is no further to beleeue them then they prooue their exposition out of the Bible: so that it continueth still not theirs, but the Lordes: and if we shoulde ascribe it vnto them, we shoulde robbe the Lorde, and be theeues for other men. Therfore in this matter, we muste followe the precept which the Lorde giueth. 1. Peter. 4. 11. He that speaketh let him speake as the wordes of God.

Ath. **Is that so meant, that it is not alowed to cite any thing out of other bookes besides the worde.**

Zelot. I tolde ye before that it is not ſimply vnlawfull for to cite or alleadge a ſentence out of a Doctor. But the maner and ende of the doing of it is all: I ſay likewiſe that a man maye in ſome ſorte alleadge a ſaying out of any heathen or prophane Writer: for wee haue the example of Saint Paule. Actes 17. 1. Corinth. 15. Titus 1. Alleadging the ſayinges of prophane Poets. But wee muſt ſee to what ende: doth he reaſon thus, the Poet ſayeth it, therefore ye are to giue credite vnto it: no man woulde be ſo fooliſhe as to make their wordes being heathen men, to be of ſuch authoritie: but he ſheweth that euen their owne doctors conſented with him in thoſe thinges. And therefore a ſhame, and foule reproche for them to bee ignorant of the ſame. When the Papiſtes doe charge vs to be gone from the fayth of the olde Fathers, although we are to confute them this waye, namely, by ſhewing their treacherie and lying, when we are able to prooue by the writinges of the auncient fathers that in the chiefe pointes they fully agree with vs: yet this is not the way which God hath appointed and ſanctified for the con-

conuersion and education of his people: this engine is ouer weake to reare vp the Temple of the Lorde: we must take heede we leaue not the mighty worde it selfe, and leane vnto a tottering piller: Saint Paule sheweth the power of the worde 2. Corin. 10. where he sayth, although we walke in the flesshe, yet wee warre not after the flesshe: for the weapons of our warrefare are not carnall, but mightie in God for to throwe downe holdes: which he expoundeth in the verse which followeth, to be the imaginations and euerie highe thing which is exalted against the knowledge of God, and euery thought, which (he sayth) they lead captiue vnto the obedience of Christ. There is no power not any authority can doe these thinges, but that which is in the worde of God it selfe. Which is to be made so euident by the Preacher, that it maye bring this thing to passe.

The miserable experience in our time of suche as flye from the strong power of the worde, and fight with the weapons of menne, maye teache vs, because it doth manifestly appeare vnto all whiche haue eyes too see, that they are not

ſtrong enough to throwe downe holdes, and to leade captiue vnto the obedience of Chriſt the rebellious thoughtes and imaginations of mens mindes : they can not ſhewe a man by them conuerted ſyncerely and throughly from errours and euill maners: by alleadging the authorities of men. It was not the practiſe of the auncient and godly Fathers in their ſermons for to leaue the teſtimonies of the mightie word, which is able to rent the ſtony rocke in peeces, and to cleaue to the authorities of weake men, which were gone before them. But what ſhoulde a man ſay? The worde is thought to be of no power vnleſſe it be ſtrengthned otherwiſe.

But let vs leaue this and come backe againe to ſome of your other matters. I remember ye did laye this as a great accuſation againſt the preachers that they medled with predeſtination.

Ath. **I did ſo and not without cauſe, for they do great hurt thereby vnto many when they teach ſuch thinges.**

Zelot. What hurt can ye ſhewe, which commeth by preaching of Predeſtination.

Ath.

Ath. If a man bee chosen for to bee saued, let him doe as euil as hee can hee shall not bee damned: and if a man be appointed before hee was borne to bee damned, let him doe neuer so much good hee cã not bee saued and therefore when yee teach this doctrine, ye were euẽ as good tel the people that they may liue as they lust: Let them neuer heare teaching, to what pourpose should it serue?

Zelot Howe proude and presumptuously bolde ignorancè doth make a mã? It might seeme to be a rare thing that a mortall man, which is but clay and dust, yea a rotten Carion shoulde aduaunce him selfe against God, euen the Lorde of infinite wisedome and glorie, but that we see it day ly for to be common.

Ath. Doe not accuse me for to be proud, I would I were as free from al other faults if it pleased God.

Zelot. If ye were as sicke, as ye be proud a very litle meate would giue ye your supper. But I knowe you doe not see your pride.

Ath. I maruell why ye shoulde counte me proude, ye see how plaine I goe.

Zelot. You thinke that pride is in the

coate, when it is in the hearte, a man maye haue a kinges hearte in his breast, and yet a beggers coate vpon his backe. There is cause why ye doe not goe gay; ye are not able: for take the raggeddest begger in the worlde, and giue her the same wing which the great Ladyes haue, and ye shall see her flie the same flight. There is pride against GOD, and against men, and you are in the deepest of them, euen against God.

Ath: **Prooue that, because ye condemne me so sore.**

Zelot. Ye take your selfe for to be wise, and the Lorde vndiscrete and vnwise. For ye charge him with folly when as ye saye this doctrine doth ouerthrow all, and yet he hath expressed it in sundry places of his worde. If it be so exceeding hurtfull, then surely Christ was to be blamed: Saint Paule, and Saint Peter with the rest of the Apostles were very vndiscreete, because they haue set it forth. It seemeth that it had bene good for them to haue taken aduise of the deepe heades of the worlde, whiche might haue foretolde them the daunger which woulde follow, and haue

ſaide, Maiſters take heede how ye deale with ſuch doctrine, it will turne ye vnto diſcredite. O fooliſhe wiſe fleſhe, this matter is ouer farre beyonde thy reache, thou canſt neuer come within the ſmell of it.

Ath. **Smell, or ſmell not, let me heare ye aunſwere the matter.**

Zelot. You ſuppoſe that your reaſons are vnaunſwerable, and that cauſeth ye to be ſo freſhe and ready, but alas man, your halfpenie is no good ſiluer, ye are in a wrong boxe, I will ſhew ye how childiſhly ye erre.

Forſooth ſay you, if God hath choſen a man to ſaluation before he was borne, then let him doe as euill as he can, he ſhall not be damned: and whereas the nature of man is prone and ready to ſeeke after the libertie of the fleſh, this doth open a doore vnto him, and a wide paſſage vnto all euill, becauſe he needeth not to care what he doth, it is appointed before hande what ſhall become of him.

This mightie and inuincible reaſon of yours hath neuer an eye to ſee with all, and although it ſeeme for to haue good legges

yet is it but an olde Criple : be not led by it for ye ſhal both fall into the ditch. Did ye neuer heare what S.Paule ſayth, Epheſians. Chapter 1.4.theſe are his wordes, as he hath choſen vs in him, before the foundations of the worlde were layde, that we ſhoulde be holy and without blame befor him through loue. Howe ſtand theſe two thinges together, when you ſay if men be choſen they may liue as they luſt, and God ſayth by his Apoſtle, that he hath choſen them for to be holy and blameleſſe in their conuerſation. And this is undoubtedly true, that thoſe whom God hath predeſtinate to be heires of glorie, he hath ſealed them whith the holy Spirite, as ye maye reade in the ſame Chapter. They are freed from the bondage of ſinne by the ſpirite, they walke in the ſpirite, they are led by the ſpirite, they ſhewe forth by the fruites of the ſpirite, that the fleſh with the luſtes & concupiſcences thereof is crucified in them, and that they are regenerate and borne againe of the ſpirite, and ſo become new creatures in Chriſte, ſinne is abominable vnto thē, they hate & loth it no leſſe then deadly poiſon, they pant and breath to

be

be wholy ſet free from the remnantes of it. Righteouſneſſe is deare and precious vnto them, their ioy and heartes delight is in it. They ſigh and grone, becauſe they can not reach vnto the perfection of it. The worde of God doth plainely teache, that the elect are thus as I haue ſhewed: and yet men ſay that election taketh away all care of godly life.

Ath. **I like not this, that men will ſaye, they know God hath choſen them: how can they tell? Can any man tell what God will doe with him? Did God euer tell them, that they are elected?**

Zelot. Howe ſhoulde you like of this, when as ye like of no goodneſſe. Howe ſhoulde you which are but a naturall man, iudge of thinges ſpirituall? You thinke a man can not tell what GOD will do with him: becauſe you are blinde and ſee not the way: ye ſuppoſe all other are ſo: you are an Infidell, or els ye might plainely heare God ſpeake in his worde, and tell which ſhall be ſaued, and which are in the way to damnation. Doe ye ſuppoſe that it is vncertaine when the ſcripture telleth a man howe he ſhall knowe that he is choſen, if the worde

of God tell him he is chosen, hath not God himselfe then told him? Read the first Chapiter of the second Epistle of Peter, & there ye shal see how a man shal know certainly that he is elected, and that he shall neuer fall. For if a man feele that God teacheth him by his spirite, and renueth him by repentance, he is sure (because God saith so) that he is chosen to eternall life: if at any time he feele the grace of God weake in him, then doth he doubt and stagger, but yet his faith getteth the vpper hande. On the other side, when a man liueth in sinne, and obeyeth vnrighteousnes: God telleth him plainly that he is in the way to damnation. And therefore all those which do not finde in them selues the spirituall birth at the least begun whereby they may assure them selues that they be chosen: May certainly say, that as yet their state is dãnable.

Ath. **How can ye saye their state is damnable, so long as they beleeue? Can mẽ do more then beleeue?**

Zelot. They doe not beleeue: for if they beleeue, then are they sure that God loueth them, what is it else which they beleeue? if they know they be in fauour with God, it is because he chose them in Christ.

If

If they doubt of Gods fauour then do they doubt whether God heareth their prayers, & therefore they shal not receiue any thing at the handes of God, as ye may learne in the Epistle of Saint.Iames.Chapter.1.verse 6.7.and although many of the faithfull doe doubt & stagger oftētimes,yet they are not like the vnfaithfull which continue in the same,but they get the vper hād, they striue by praier & by al other meanes which God hath appointed,to strengthen and increase their faith,their knowledge,their repētāce, & so farre to grow in grace,vntil they com to assurāce that God hath chosen them. As for the wicked they know of no such faith, that a man may attaine to assurāce of his electiō:they labour not about any such matter,but cōtinue stil in their blind doubts,setting all vpon hazard: and as for their doing what they can,it is nothing,they cānot but sin,& therfore be damned,howsoeuer they seem for to do good works,yet before god they are no good works because they procede not of faith,but frō the flesh: they are not graffed into the true vine,Christ, & for that cause can bring forth no fruit.Ihon.15.

Ath. **If GOD had chosen men before the worlde to be saued, Wherefore did**

Christ dye for to saue them? If they should be saued before, his death was more then needed. Wherefore should men be taught, wherefore should they pray? all these are in vaine.

Zelot. You are like vnto a man whiche doeth make strife & debate betweene brethren and friendes: you woulde set prayer and teaching, and the death of Christ, together by the eares with Gods election: but doe what ye can, all these will agree wel to gether, they be so vnseparably knit in friēdship. God hath chosen men for to be redeemed in his sonne. For the scripture sheweth that we are chosē in Christ. He hath chosen men to bee instructed and called by preaching the word, hee hath chosen mē for to call vpon him and to worship him, in holynes and righteousnes, all the dayes of their life.

Ath. Ye speake much of preaching, preaching as though it were so needful: Can they make the word of God better then it is? Is there not enough set downe in the Bible for men to read wherefore shoulde they adde more? Can not men read that? Is not reading preaching?

Zelot. Now ye seeke new starting holes.

There

There is ſome Colt ſo wilde, that he will trouble halfe a doſen light men of foote for to driue him: he wil in at euery gappe, turne at euery lane, and out at euery gate. Euen ſo I can liken the reaſoning with ſuch as you are: ye haue ſo many by ſhiftes, ſo many cauils, ſo many turninges, that ten of the beſt learned in this lande, ſhal hardely be able to keepe ye in the way. But we muſt not leaue ye thus but bring ye into the way againe. Preaching is not ſo needeful, they can make the word of God no better then it is: why man they doe not preach for to make the worde better, but for to make you better. There is enough ſet downe in the Bible, but you vnderſtand litle enough of it. Men maye reade it, as a great number doe which peruert it, and are nothing betred by it, becauſe they ſeeke not helpe for to vnderſtād it. Reading ſay you is preaching. Truly then I knowe a man which hath a litle daughter, that is a trimme preacher. I perceiue our lande is full of preachers: but yet in deede not ſuch as Saint Paule deſcribeth. For the litle girle is not apt to teach, able to inſtruct to exhort, to conuince, nor to deuide or cut the word of God aright, nor to open the Miſteries of it. If ye leape ouer many of

these ditches, ye will breake your necke in the ende: ye are a very skilfull man, when ye take expounding & applying the word of God, for to be adding: for ye aske why they should adde.

Ath. **Are not men allowed which are but readers, euen by the learnedest in the lande? Do ye finde fault with the Bishops? or are ye one of those which doe not allowe of Bishops? for such fellowes there be now a dayes.**

Zelot. I wouldе ye should know that I am none of those which disalow Bishops: when as the worde of God doth sette it downe to be a worthie worke: it is a verye reuerende office, and exceedingly they are to be blamed, which doe contemne it, or deface it. GOD hath ordeyned the office of Bishoppes in his Church, for to gouerne and feede his people: such as would abolish this ordinance of God, doe resist God, and are enemies vnto the church of Christ.

Ath. **By my faith, I like ye the better for that.**

Zelot. I like you neuer the better for your swearing.

Ath. **I am not so precise as to make any**

any account of ſwearing by my faith.

Zelot. I thinke ſo, for faith is no more account made of, then as a packehorſe, all is layde on his backe,

Ath. I pray God we may do no worſe, and then I hope we ſhall doe well enough: are you without ſinne? I doubt not but ye will commit as great offence to GOD as this, or euer the weeke be ended. Pull the beame out of your owne eye: If euery man woulde looke to him ſelfe, there ſhoulde not be ſo much finding faulte one with an other.

Zelot, Where learne ye that prayer in the ſcripture? The Prophet Dauid, Pſalm. 19. Prayeth to be clenſed from his ſecrete ſinnes, although they be neuer ſo ſmall. Where learned ye to ſpeake after this ſort, no woorſe, aud that ye hope then to doe well enough: Is it nothing to breake ſo ſtraight a rule of Chriſt? Doe ye not thinke that children dying in their infancy, before they can ſpeake or worke are damned for leſſe ſins. I ſpeke of ſuch as are not of Gods church. When as they haue onely originall ſin. You know not frō how euil a roote this ſinne doth ſpring: neither doe ye know the

foulenesse of sinne, and therefore yee cannot tell howe much God doth abhorre it, and comdemne it. For this cause, beeing as full of filthie vices and prophane sinnes as yee can be thrust, and of such in deede as God doeth curse and hate: because they seeme smal vnto you, ye suppose ye shal do well enough. What if I haue greater in me or that I shal commit greater as you say before the weeke be ended, doth that excuse you? I haue many secret sinnes in me, which I do not see because I doe not perfectly vnderstand the law of God: for these I do earnestly intreat the Lord to make thē known vnto mē, by giuing me more perfect vnderstanding of his will, and also to giue me power for to cast them out. I haue also many sinnes in me which I see and knowe, that cleaue so fast, that I can not vtterly cast thē foorth: not withstanding I hate & abhorre them, I am wearie of them, I fight against them, I grone and sigh in my heart with sorow for them, I feele no sweetnesse in them for they are more bitter then Gall vnto my soule. I am exceeding glad whē I can suppresse them, I haue professed and vowed a continuall warre against them, & although I preuaile not so farre as to be vtterly ridde

of

of them, yet I labour by meditation in Gods worde, and by heartie prayer, to bring them vnder, that they raigne not ouer me, nor that I may not agree with them: and although I be not able to become perfect, yet with all the might I can, I straine and breath to come as nigh perfection as I can: my desire is good to reach it, and although I finde that I come many degrees short, yet I approche nearer and nearer. This is true repentance, this is that which Saint Paule setteth forth in him selfe. Rom. 7. Philip. 3. With this I know God is pleased, without this there can not be any seruice done to God.

Ath. **I like not when men will spie a mote in another mans eye.**

Zelot. Our Sauiour Christ doth not forbid to espie a mote in an other mans eye, for we are commaunded to admonish one an other, whatsoeuer it be, wherein we doe amisse: but such as you, which can not abide to be admonished, doe euer alleadge that saying of Christ, as though he had spoken it vnto this ende, that one should not admonish an other. It is a foule hypocrisie for a man to be curious in reprouing small faultes in other, and make

no conſcience of great and foule vices in him ſelfe. Euerie man ought to looke vnto him ſelfe, and euery man is bounde by the worde of God, and charitie, to looke vnto others, and to conuerte them from their ſinnes if they can. To conuert a ſinner from going aſtray, and to ſaue a ſoule from death. As Saint Iames ſpeaketh, Cap. 5. verſ. 20. And ſo to couer a multitude of ſinnes, is a bleſſed thing, and ought, to moue men with diligence to vſe charitable admonition.

Ath. **If they would doe it in charitie, I could like of it: but men haue no loue, they doe it becauſe they are precise and captious.**

Zelot. Let a man ſee ye commit any foule crime, and reprooue ye, your aunſwere is by and by, ye maye not iudge: when as the matter is plaine and doth iudge it ſelfe: Now when a man doth admoniſh you, according as God commaundeth, ye are bolde with the ſame mouth, which ſaide, ye ought not to iudge, for to iudge him, affirming that he doth it of a captious and quarelling minde: the thing being ſo exceeding good of it ſelfe: who made you able for to ſee into the heart of a man, and

to

to finde that he doth it not well. You are those of whom the Prophet speaketh, Wo be vnto those which call good euill, and euill good. If he be a man spotted with vices him selfe, and doth reprooue another, not caring for to amend, ye may boldly say he doth it of an euill minde: for can he be charitable vnto other men, to seeke their conuersion, and not to be charitable vnto him selfe to seeke his owne saluation? Or can he hate vngodlinesse in other, and not hate it in him selfe?

Ath. Well, the best of vs all may be amended, we haue all infirmities: what would ye haue more then this, at the last for to call for mercy: If a man be sorie and aske God forgiuenes, is he not euen as well as they which are the most precise: the mercy of God must saue all: and what would ye haue a man care for more then to be saued? I praye God I may haue time to repent in the ende.

Zelot. Here is good stuffe, here is sound diuinitie: I maye well terme this reason euen the porter of hell, for it openeth euen the widest gate, that a thousand maye goe in on a rancke.

This is true, that the best of vs all may be

amended, and that we haue all infirmities: but ye doe wickedly applie it, for when ye should reason thus, the best may be amended, the most holie are spotted, and therefore as Saint Paule doth teache, they must indeuour for to proceede forwarde: for the worde of God willeth men to striue & contende euen against all vncleannesse, and neuer to cease, but to come as nigh perfection as is possible. But you reason quite contrarie, that because the best are sinners, therefore men are to make small account to amend. Ye should thinke thus, the most godly haue neede to sorrow and mourne, and proceede in repentance, therefore how much neede, haue such as are grosse sinners. For our Sauiour Christ doth shew, Iohn. 8. That whosoeuer committeth sinne, is the seruant of sinne: Now so long as a man is the seruant of sinne, so long is he not the seruant of God, for no man can serue two so contrarie masters. Saint Iohn sayeth, hee that committeth sinne, is of the Deuill. Where learned ye this, that a man may continue in his vices all his life, and at the last call for mercie? God commandeth men to repent speedely, and not to put of from day to day. He threat-

threatneth exceeding ſharply, in the firſt Chapiter of the Prouerbes, that when he hath called and cryed vnto men for to returne from their euill wayes, and they haue refuſed, that at the laſt, they ſhall call and not be hearde: he will laugh when their deſtruction commeth vppon them: they ſhall ſeeke him, but not finde him. Doe you thinke that when God hath called and we refuſe, that we ſhall not call and he refuſe?

Ath. **The Scripture ſayth, that what time ſoeuer a ſinner doth repente him of his ſinne, God will forgiue him.**

Zelot. If the ſcripture ſpeake any thing to the comfort of the ſorowfull heart, the Deuill doth teache the impenitent for to abuſe it to their hardening. It is moſt true, that at what time ſoeuer a ſinner doth repent, his ſinnes are all forgiuen, but is it in a mans choiſe for to repent when he will, can he take a new heart when it doth pleaſe him, can he haue the new birth, and a right ſpirite when he will? It is God which doth create a man a new, or maketh him a new creature in Chriſt, when it pleaſeth him. A man needeth not for to care for any thing but to be ſaued, but that is not ſo eaſie a

matter as men thinke. Striue for to enter in at the straight gate (sayth Christ) for many shall striue and shall not enter. The way is narowe and the gate is straight which leadeth vnto life, and few there be which find it: and if this be true which you say, that a man may liue in sinne all his life, and at the last be saued euen for vttering a few words, then the way is broad & easie, who cannot finde it, who almost doth not walke in it? But alas, it is a broken staffe which men do leane vnto. God is very mercifull, but not to those which despise his Gospell, for vengeance belongeth vnto such: it is vnpossible (sayth the holy Ghost. Hebr. 2.) that such should escape. And although ye haue neuer so long time to repēt, if God do not worke it in ye, you shall dye in that blindnesse and hardnesse of heart in which ye haue liued: we must seeke in our life time to be begotten by the word: for the scripture saith God doth beget his children by that.

Ath. **Shall not a man hope for to repent at the last?**

Zelot. Marke what repentance is: and try whether ye can repent now, if ye cannot, what moueth ye to thinke that ye shall be able then?

Ath.

Ath. **I hope I do repent now, and shall do at the ende.**

Zelot. Repentance is a returning home vnto God from all euill vices and corrupte desires which are in the flesh & in the heart. To be renued by repentance, cannot be but where a man is renued in knowledge, for that is one part of the Image of God which must be restored in vs: Read in the 4. Chapter to the Eph. from the 17. verse forwarde. If a man continue in darknesse, he doth not repent: He which cõmitteth his foule sinnes still, although it be but in the desire of his heart, hath not repẽted. He which doth not feele sorow and griefe, and hath not a broken and contrite heart, and a sorowfull spirit, hath not repented: he which doth not eschue euill and doe good, hath not repented: All these are taught by the worde, for that is it by which we must clense our wayes and therfore ye may boldly say, that he which learneth not out of Gods worde to repent, cannot repent for although if it were possible he could repent for all other sinnes, yet this one sinne, to set light by the instruction of the Gospell, will make still worse then they of Sodome, as our Sauiour doth tell vs Matth. 11.

Ath. **Will you condemne those which call for mercy at their ende which neuer repented before?**

Zelot. We may not pronounce vpon any one man, because God onely seeth what is in man. But yet we may boldely goe so farre as the word of God doth leade vs; and by it we may see what God requireth and what God doth condemne. We may see that the common and generall repentance which all professe at their ende is not so much as a shadow of true repentance: repentance can not be in a man, especially vpon a sodeine, but he must needes feele a wonderfull change in himselfe: he must needes be able for to say I haue repented, I knowe and feele that I am a new man, and therefore because I know most certainely that there is repentance in me, I know most certainly that I shall be saued: for God promiseth saluation vnto euery one which doeth repent. In the common repentance men feele no such thing, But are still (as they may be well enough) in doubt of saluation.

Ath. **Shall not all such as call vpon God be heard, surely I dare not but thinke they shall.**

Zelot.

Zelot. I am ſure becauſe the Lord doth ſpeake it. That whoſoeuer do h call vppon him ſhall be ſaued. But yet ye muſt put this in, that then they muſt pray in faith, as for the prayers of a wicked mâ which doth not repent, and therefore ha.h not the true faith they are no prayers before God, although he crie lowde, or call neuer ſo often: for vnto ſuch the Lord ſpeaketh in the firſt Chapter of the Prophet Iſaiath, When ye ſtretch forth your hands, I will turne away mine eyes from ye. Alſo if ye multiply your prayer I will not heare. Likewiſe the holy Ghoſt ſaith by Solomon in the Prouerbes that the ſacrifice of the wicked is an abhomination. And in the ſame booke it is ſaid. He that turneth away his eare from hearing the lawe, euen his prayer ſhall be abhominable, and therefore in the latter ende of the fourth Chapter of Eccleſiaſtes, he aduiſeth men when they come into the houſe of God, to take heade to their feete: and to be readier to heare then to offer the ſacrifice of fooles. For (ſaith he) they know not that they doe euill. Now ye ſhall finde many men crye in their miſeries and make great confeſſion of their vngodly life: but yet without true repentance, as it is mani-

feſt,for ſo ſoone as they proſper againe, ye ſhall ſee them returne to their olde byas:if they had truly repented,then ſhoulde it euer continue with them, many that liue in malice, ſo ſoone as they be daungerouſly ſicke,will be readie to aske forgiuenes,and to forgiue all the worlde. They knowe it booteth not to beare malice any longer, but ſo ſoone as they be able to craulle out of their bedde, and to ſtande vppon their legges,ye ſhall ſee their old wythered malice (as it ſeemed) ſpring a freſhe againe which is a ſtrong proofe, that they ueuer truely repented, howſouer they thought they did. And euen ſo is it in all other ſinnes, they ſeeme vnto men for to repent they aske God forgiueneſſe, but yet thehearte abideth ſtill the ſame that it was before God: there is no chaunge in them before God:they haue not put of the ſinnfull bodye of the fleſhe: there is no change in them before God:howſoeuer they ſeme to be chaunged before men. This counterfet repentãce maketh men bold al their life to diſpiſe the holy word of God,which ſhould inſtruct and guide them: it cauſeth them at their end not to feare the wrath of God,nor the vengeance to come: becauſe

they.

rhey thinke God is ſatisfied with this repentance, and alſo becauſe they knowe not their ſinnes, they ſuppoſe that they are but ouer the ſhoes, when as they are drowned in the goulfe of vncleanneſſe ouer head & eares.

Ath. **God helpe vs if it be thus: how ſhal poore men do then?**

Zelot. Men muſt apply them ſelues all their life to ſeeke for the knowledge of God, to increaſe in faith and repentance that when they come to their ende, they may haue a teſtimonie of conſcience, that they haue feared God.

Likewiſe when ye come to a ſicke man and aske howe he doth, if he can but ſaye, as it pleaſeth GOD, ye aunſwere, that is enough neighbour, holde ye there: If he ſay I haue offended GOD, and I praye GOD haue mercy vppon me, there needeth no more as you thinke. Ye ſhoulde teach them the Lawe, that they may ſee howe they haue offended God, ye ſhoulde ſhew them the fearefull curſe, and horrible vengeance due vnto ſinne, that ſo they may be ſtricken with remorſe and ſorowe: ye ſhould ſhew them alſo the glad tidings of the Goſpell, and what Chriſt offereth

vnto the penitent ſinner: ye ſhoulde teach them what holines God requireth at their hande, howe they may come vnto it, what promiſſe they haue made to God of it in baptiſme. Ye ſhoulde inſtruct them in all the principall poyntes of the faith. That ſo they may haue the renuing faith which ſhal iuſtifie and ſaue them.

Ath. **What difference can you ſhewe betweene thoſe which are not taught as you woulde haue them, and ſuch as haue knowleng, they can no more but repent, call for mercie, and beleeue. And this do they aſwel as the other.**

Zelot. You thinke there is no difference, but there is this difference, that the one part doth beleeue & repent in deede, and the other but in worde: as our Sauiour Chriſt Matth. 15. alleageth the ſaying of God by his Prophete, This people drawe neere me with their mouth, and honour me with their lippes, but their heart is farre from me.

Ath. **That is meant when a man doth ſpeake with his mouth, and meaneth not with his hearte, but theſe haue a good meaning in their minde.**

Zelot. It is meant when a man approcheth

cheth with his mouth,& hath ſtill a wicked heart,and an euill conſcience,for thoſe doe remooue a man ſo farre from God, that no blind intent can make him neere vnto him God looketh for great things in the heartes of thoſe which call vppon him.

Ath. **I thinke God accepteth the prayer of the honeſt poore man as well as of any other,and wil heare him as ſoone,as he wil heare the prayer of thoſe which know moſt, and are the beſt learned.**

Zelot. God is no accepter of perſons, he heareth the poore aſwell as the riche, the vnlearned as well as the learned, ſo that their prayers be made aright.But if ye ſpeake of thoſe honeſt men which are ſo called,and yet are voyde of all knowledge of Gods worde,& of religion, it is an eaſie matter for to prooue that their prayers are not good.

Ath. **Can ye haue any better prayer then the Lordes prayer, when they praye that,can ye require more?**

Zelot. There can be no better prayer then the Lords Prayer, and he which prayeth that right muſt needes be ſaued. But let me aske you this queſtion, what if a man pray the Lords prayer with his mouth

and

and regardeth it not in his heart, ſhall his prayer be good?

Ath. His prayer cannot be good, he doth but mocke God.

Zelot, Then tell me this, a man prayeth thus, hallowed be thy name. in word he ſeemeth to deſire that the name of God may be ſanctified and honoured: he goeth his way, & blaſhemeth the name of God, or heareth it blaſphemed & neuer careth, rayleth vpon his word, diſhonoureth him, doe ye not thinke that he made a ſweete prayer? In like manner he ſayth, thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen, he goeth away and and is ſo farre from deſiring to doe the will of God, that he neuer careth for to knowe it. Whereby it is euident that he litle ment with his heart that which he ſaide with his tongue.

Moreouer, he would ſeeme in wordes to craue of God that he and others might doe the will of God in earth, as the Angels doe in heauen: and yet tell him when he breaketh the will of God, and his anſwere is, I am not ſo preciſe, I am not ſo curious, I will not be ſo holy, you are full of the ſpirite: and then he will euen reproch that

which

which he ſeemed for to pray for. And theſe are the prayers of thoſe poore honeſt men which you thinke God heareth aswell as the prayers of any other. I might goe thorough al the petitions & finde the like. It is exceeding great pitie that mē want inſtruction: for a great multitude doe truſt to their pratling prayers, when as they do not either vnderſtande what they ſay, or elſe meane the contrary.

Ath. **If a man labour all the weeke truely and honeſtly, and vpon the Sabboth day come to the Church and make his praiers, ſhall we ſay God regarded not his praier, becauſe he doth not vnderſtande what he prayeth: his intent is good, he doth his good will: he hath a wife and children to prouid for, he muſt follow the worlde, and let preachinge goe, or elſe he ſhall begge: and ſo longe as he doth hurte no man, but dealeth vprightly: I thinke God doth require no more at his handes. Such as haue naught elſe for to doe let them ſeeke for knowledge.**

Zelot. Ye are like vnto a hedge which is ful of bryers and pricking thornes, a man cannot lay holde on ye vnleſſe he bring

his hedging gloues and his bill. Ye haue many things to shroude your selfe vnder, and to keepe the truth from touching of ye, as the Lorde in his worde hath set forth the whole armour for a christian souldier: so likewise Satan doth by suggestion teach men to arme themselues against the Lord. But ye must be stript of your armour, at the lest ye must be shewed that it is no armour of proofe. Ye say that if a man labour truly & honestly all the weeke, those labour so which do it not alone for necessitie, but because God requireth that men should painfully trauell: and which haue the worde of God as a lanterne for to guid their steppes: for whatsoeuer a man doth if it be not in obedience of God in his word, it is sinne. To pray vpon the Sabboth for fashiō sake, is ucry detestable, because we are in continuall danger, & in continuall neede, & wāt helpe continually from the Lorde, vppon whom our saluation doth daiely depende: we are commaunded to pray continually, or to haue our heartes watching thereunto To pray without vnderstāding, is not praying, but mumming. You speake as though it were a thing which God doth allow, that men should seeke more after the world thē

after

after God: and so make the worlde their God. And because they haue wife and children to prouide for, therefore they cannot seeke to know God. As though we were not commaunded to seeke first, the kingdome of God, that is to seeke that chiefly, and more then the worlde, and then God hath promised, that all these thinges shall be cast vpon vs. How shall any man be excused when God maketh this promise vnto all: as he doth perfourme it vnto as many as doe trust him. I haue bene young (sayth the Prophet) and now am olde, yet did I neuer see the righteous forsaken, and his seede begging their bread. When ye say he must follow the world, and let preaching goe, ye were euen as good say, he must follow the Deuil, and let God go. And if an ignorant man coulde come so farre as to deale vprightly, and to hurt no man neither in worde nor deede (which notwithstanding they come nothing neere) yet this woulde not serue the turne: for there is a God who will be knowne and worshipped in that religion which he teacheth. Haue ye so fleshly eyes that ye can looke no higher? Doe ye thinke God requireth no more but an honest and ciuill conuersation towardes

men. God requireth euen of the poore labouring man that he ſhould (if he will be bleſſed) meditate in his Lawe, or his Doctrine daye and night, Pſalme 1. Likewiſe whē he ſayth that the man is bleſſed which feareth the Lorde, to the ende we might know which that man is, he addeth immediately, he hath great delight in his commaundements. But the moſt part of your honeſt men nowe a dayes, delight ſo much in the worde of God, and meditate ſo much in it, that they care not a button though they neuer heare it: they loue it and ſet as much by it as they doe by an olde ſhoe. And are not ſo forwarde as you doe allowe, to ſeeke for the knowledge of God, when they haue naught els for to doe: for you thinke ye graunt a liberall allowaunce to God.

Ath. **Would ye make me beleeue that God doth require that men ſhould leaue their buſines: when they be poore and haue charge of children, and giue themſelues to reading, and hearing of preachings. Would ye haue him let his children ſterue.**

Zelot. God doth not require that men ſhould leaue their buſines, but as they haue times to ſeeke for the thinges of the body,

ſo alſo are their times, for to ſeeke for heauenly thinges: God hath not made men for this life, but for the worlde to come. He hath ſet the promiſes of eternall life before them that ſeeke thē painfully in his worde, men muſt not be as bruite beaſtes all for the belly.

Ath. **What if there be no preaching where a man dwelleth?**

Zelot. What if there be within three or foure mile?

Ath. **Shall he runne three or foure mile after that?**

Zelot. Ye goe about three or foure mile to the market for to prouide meat for the carion body, but ye would not allowe a man vpon that day which is the market day for the food of the ſoule to goe halfe ſo farre. Ye are the children of the worlde, earth, wormes, thoſe which labour for the meate which periſheth, but will not labour for the meate which indureth for euer, Iohn.6. Ye loue the world and the thinges which are in the world, and therefore as Saint Iohn ſayth in his firſt Epiſtle, The loue of the Father is not in ye, ye cannot ſerue God, and Mammon.

Ath. **Let them runne that will, when**

I see them agree better together, then I wil heare them, when they cannot agree among themselues, they are vnwise which hearken vnto them.

Zelot. Ye might be a counsellour for your graue wisedome, who is able to aunswere you in this matter: when ye dashe forth so strong an argument, grounded vpō so great reason, and infallible principles: but I praye ye what would ye haue doone if ye had liued in the time of Ieremie the Prophet, and also of other Prophetes, when there were the Priestes and the rulers in the Temple, with many which tooke vpon thē to be Prophetes, and to speake in the name of the Lorde, set against a few of Gods messengers? What woulde yee haue doone when Christ preached, and the Pharisees and Priests, and all the learned against him. Would ye not haue hearde Paule, because he disagreed with the false Apostles? The Scriptures haue foretolde that there shalbe heresies, sectes, and false teachers in the Church euen to the worldes ende. Your great skill hath taught yee to make so good a choise of the time when yee will heare, and to take so long a day, for I warrant ye it will not be two weekes before the

the day of doome. Ye ſhould ſpeake plainely and ſay: Ye neuer meane for to heare, and that ye would wiſhe all other for to be of the ſame minde: and then ye ſhould be litle troubled with Gods worde. Cry out againſt the Preachers, but let your meaning be againſt preaching it ſelfe. The Deuill is a very ſkilfull workeman, he doth not teach his ſchollers to ſay, fie vpon Gods worde: but to find excuſes how to ſhift themſelues from hearing the ſame.

Ath. **If they woulde teache men how to beleeue better, then I coulde bee content for to ſaye as you ſaye: But they would driue men into diſpayre, and bring them out of beliefe with the feare of damnation.**

Zelot. This wedge hath bene driuen often enough alreadie, neuertheleſſe, becauſe ye are ſo knottie, and crabbed a peece to cleeue, I will giue it one blow more: the matter is hainouſly taken that men preach ſharply in reprehending the vices which now raigne. They are now faide to preache nothing but the Lawe, which in deede cannot conuert a man from vngodlineſſe, but of it ſelfe is the ſtrength of ſinne: they are

ſaide to be murtherers, becauſe they preach but the dead letter which doth kill. No doubt whoſoeuer doth preach no more but the Lawe, and ſo damnation, is no miniſter of Chriſt. But here lyeth all the matter, men would be flattered and ſoothed in their ſinnes, they are loth for to heare of any iudgement of God againſt wickedneſſe: and as they be like vnto the people of the Iewes when the Prophetes were ſent vnto them, corrupt and corrupting themſelues, and grudging againſt the Meſſengers of God when they threatened vengeance, and willing them not to preache ſo, but to preache pleaſant thinges: euen ſo are there nowe which laye pillowes vnder their elbowes and preache peace, peace, when all is corrupt in their liues, and therefore there can be no peace. He which ſhall reade the Prophetes, ſhall finde the ſtate of the Church then, and ours nowe, in all theſe thinges verie like: Firſt, all foule vices ouerflowing, as among vs: Secondly, the people preſuming vpon their blinde faith, and counterfet repentance, and hypocriticall prayers, as they do nowe: Thirdly, the Prophetes ſent of God exceeding ſharply

reproo-

reproouing them, and denouncing the iudgements of God against them: Fourthly, the people repining thereat, and thinking them selues hardely dealt withall: desiring to be more tenderly handeled as to heare pleasant thinges, and to haue them prophesie of wine and strong drinke: Lastly, certaine Preachers fit for the turne, healing vp, and smoothing vp all with sweete wordes, and telling them all is well, all is well. He which doth but lightly reade ouer the Prophetes, and cannot finde all these thinges, is but a simple man. In like manner he which doth dwell among vs at this day, and perceiueth no such matters, is but a stranger.

Ath. **May you that are precise Puritans doe finde fault where there is none: you condemne men for euerie trifle. Whereas ye are but men, and haue your infirmities as well as other: yet yee woulde make your selues as holy as Angels.**

Zelot. I abhorre the errour of the Catherists or Puritans, I confesse that I am loden with corruptions: if that be your meaning, to charge me with that opinion, which is wicked and diuelishe. But if ye

take the name Puritane for one which hath more care to obey God, then the common sort, and therefore laboureth to keepe himselfe pure and vnspotted of the worlde (as Saint Iames speaketh) then looke to it, that ye be not founde among those which reuile not men but God. If ye meane by precise men, those which are so scrupulous, as to make sinne where there is none, as your wordes doe plainely shew, then doe I vtterly renounce that name for to be called precise, and I disalow such fond persons, whosoeuer they be. But I knowe you meane those which walke precisely as Saint Paule willeth, and do take heede to their wayes: not condemning men, but admonishing them, not in trifles, but in waightie matters: although you count them trifles. The commaundements of God (at the least some of them) are but trifles with you. You see not, nor consider how great the Lord God is, and therefore ye dare affirme diuers sinnes done against him to be but trifling and small, ye measure not sinne with a true measure, when ye doe measure it after the rule of a man. Ye doe not know wherefore there is eternall death threatned against euery small sinne: ye meruell

uell at that, becauſe ye are blinde and cannot iudge howe great he is, whoſe will is diſobeyed. Let me ſet it before ye: Doe ye not ſuppoſe that if one of your degree ſhould ſay ſome thing againſt ye that were a reproch, as for example, call ye knaue, were it not an offence?

Ath. **I thinke I may well ſay he doth offend, for he ought not to deale ſo with his neighbour.**

Zelot. Then he is worthie ſome rebuke for his euill tongue.

Ath. **Yea, and to confeſſe his fault alſo.**

Zelot. What if he ſhould giue ſuch language to a Iuſtice of peace? or to ſome inferiour Magiſtrate? Ye will cõfeſſe the fault is greater: becauſe it is againſt a higher perſon.

Ath. **No doubt the fault ſhould be greater, and he were worthie to ſit by the heeles for it.**

Zelot. What if he ſhoulde doe it to a nobleman, as one of the chiefe Counſellours of the Prince, were it not then much greater?

Ath. **I muſt needes confeſſe ſo: and ſuch a villaine were worthy for to loſe his eares.**

Zelot. What if he ſhould doe it vnto a Prince?

Ath. He were worthie then for to loſe his life.

Zelot. Doe ye not knowe that God is in an infinite degree aboue Princes, they are but duſt before him.

Ath. I knowe that well enough.

Zelot. Wherefore haue ye not the reaſon then for to conſider, that thoſe ſinnes which ſeeme to be verie ſmall, are exceeding great, becauſe they be done againſt his infinite Maieſtie. The ignorance of this point cauſeth many men for to make but a light account of diuers ſinnes, and euen to laugh at them: likewiſe to mocke at thoſe which make conſcience of them, counting them ouer preciſe and nice. Such men doe not know the Lorde aright in his moſt high maieſtie: They know not the waighineſſe of his lawe, euen in the leaſt point in it. And it is ouer childiſhe which they obiect againſt the godly, haue not you infirmities? are you not men? What would they gather herby, that becauſe mē haue infirmities, therefore they may not reproue ſuch as wilfully and careleſly offend. The reſt of your ſpeech is a meere ſlaūder, a

deuice

deuice which the Deuill hath founde out for to ſhame true godlines. For let a man haue but the tenth part of the zeale, which the worde of God requireth, or neuer ſo litle a ſparke of indeuour for to walke vprightly, & he ſhall haue it caſt in his teeth, that he thinketh himſelfe halfe a God, and taketh him ſelfe to be as holy as an Angell,

Ah. **A number doe ſo in deede, or elſe they would not be ſo readie fore to checke euerie man: and eſteeme ſo well of themſelues.**

Zelot. Doth that bone ſticke in your throte ſtill, take heede that it do not choke ye. Ye take it for a ſore checke, when any doth refuſe to take parte with you in your wickednes: following the counſell of Saint Paule, when he ſaith haue no fellowſhip with the vnfruitfull workes of darkeneſſe, but rather reprooue them. Light is come into the worlde, and men loue darkeneſſe more then light, becauſe their woorkes be euill. How wel they eſteeme of themſelues you cannot tell: this is moſt certaine, that although a godly man hath nothinge of his owne for to boaſt of, becauſe it is the grace of the Lorde, which hathe putte

the difference, yet ye may well thinke better of him selfe, then of the wicked. And such as haue no regard to serue God but in a few wordes.

Ath. **Doe ye thinke that there be none which are ouer precise: which would seeme for to be so holy, and yet are not.**

Zelot. The Deuill is a cunning workemã, when he seeketh for to bring the truth into discredite, he can play on both hands, he can deceiue on euerie side. And therefore he hath some vaine & curious braines which are ouer precise in things which are no sinne, passing by fouie and great sinnes in themselues, which is a great vanitie, and vnder colour of godly zeale, which they would seeme for to haue, they couer their bitternesse euen of wormewood, and Gall. which vncharitably sometimes they caste foorth vpon such as are more godly then themselues. But this ought not for to be any discredite vnto such as are zealous and earnest against those thinges which are vices in deed, although they seeme for to be neuer so small: as for example, when one doth sweare as you did, by his faith, or by bread, or fire: tell him of it: what is his answere: ye are ouer precise: I meane no hurt

neither

neither to God nor men: I ſpeake earneſtly, I doe not lye: If it be a ſinne, it is but a ſmall ſinne. But ſee howe groſſe an excuſe this is, he breaketh the commaundement of God, & yet he meaneth no hurt: Chriſt our great teacher doth ſtraightly vrge it, & yet he ſaith it is but a ſmal ſinne, a thing not to be regarded. Howe much diſhonour is this to our heauenly Maiſter, to ſay that he taught things ſo ſmall & trifling, that they are not to be regarded?

Ath. **Well, it is happie that we ſhalbe ſaued by faith in Chriſt, although we be ſinnefull: he hath ſhead his blood for vs: I looke for to be ſaued by him, what would ye haue more.**

Zelot. It is happie in deede for thoſe which haue faith, for they are clenſed from their ſinnes. But ſuch as you ſeeke no more but to make the death of Chriſt as en eaſie ſcore to ſet all vppon: for ye are like to the man which thinking that he ſhould haue al of his hoſtis for ſcoring vp, tooke very liberally: ye thinke the reckoning is now ſo eaſie, that ye may ſet cock a howpe, al is paid for. But if I ſhoulde trie your faith by the worde, ye ſhoulde ſee that ye haue litle enough: & therefore your ſcore will faile in

the ende, and growe to a greater payment then ye suppose.

Ath. **Whatsoeuer you say, ye shal neuer driue me from beleeuing in Christ: nor all the sort of ye.**

Zelot. I would not for tenne thousand worldes be the man which should driue any one from the faith in Christ, I doe seeke to bring ye vnto the faith in Christ.

Ath. **Ye may keepe such seeking to your selfe, and let me alone: I beleeue as well as you, take care for your selfe, you shall not answere for me.**

Zelot. Nowe ye are sure I trowe, for this night, ye haue stopped my mouth, and giuen we a bone to gnawe vpon. But I pray ye, shal not I answere for you in no respect? What if I see ye are blinde and ready for to fall into the pit of eternall destruction, and will not put forth my hande for to succour ye, is it not to be laid vnto my charge, that I wanted loue? Therefore I can easily pull your bridle out of my mouth: and be so bold as for to meddle with ye: we will a litle trie, because ye bragge so stoutly, howe wel ye beleeue. Ye beleeue Christ was crucified, and suffred vpon the Crosse: but are ye able for to prooue that ye beleeue in

Christ

Christ crucified.

Ath. **I say I doe, are you able for to disproue me?**

Zelot. Sinne is not slaine in ye, therfore ye doe not.

Ath. **Howe proue ye that sinne is not slaine in me.**

Zelot. Because it doth raigne in ye, herfore it is aliue.

Ath. **I knowe not what ye meane by that.**

Zelot. Ye are ledde by sinne, ye delight in it, ye haue not mortified the lustes and concupiscences of the same. And therefore ye haue not learned Christ, as Saint Paule speaketh, Ephesians. 4. Ye haue not put of the olde man, and put one the newe man. The death and passion of Christ hath not slaine sinne in ye, for to beleeue in Christ crucified, is for to be crucified with him, as the Apostles do teach in sundry places. The reason is this, Christ was not crucified for to slaie sinne in him selfe, (for he had none) but in his members which are ioyned and knit vnto him by faith, in them the force and power of his death doth shewe it selfe: now he which hath not this worke of the death of Christ in him, that he feeleth

him ſelfe crucified concerning the body of ſin, his faith in the paſſion of Chriſt is but a dead faith, and cannot ſaue him. This is the cauſe why Saint Paule ſaith, Rom. 8. That thoſe which are in Chriſt, walke not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirite. Saint Iohn ſaith, 1. Epiſtle, Chapter. 3. Ye knowe that he was made manifeſt to take away our ſinnes, and in him was no ſinne. Whoſoeuer abideth in him ſinneth not, he that ſinneth hath not ſeene him, not knowne him.

Ath. **Then by that reaſon, ye woulde prooue that all that beleeue in Chriſt are perfect without ſinne. I thinke all are ſinners.**

Zelot. Whoſoeuer is borne of God ſinneth not. 1. Iohn. 3. 9.

Ath. **Is there any man which can ſay that he is without ſinne?**

Zelot. Not one whiche liueth in this fleſh.

Ath. **Then ye are contrarie vnto your ſelfe: for euen now ye ſaide. That whoſoeuer abideth in Chriſt ſinneth not, and he which is borne of God ſinneth not: and now ye confeſſe that all are ſinners ſo long as they liue.**

Zelot. I am not contrarie vnto my ſelfe but

but your blindneſſe cauſeth ye for to thinke ſo. Looke in the Epiſtle to the Romans Chapter, 7. And there yee ſhall finde how S. Paule couplethboth theſe things together in himſelfe, which you iudge to bee ſo contrary, that by no meanes they maybe found in one man together at one time. He cõfeſſeth that there was a lawe in his members, rebelling againſt the law of his mind, & leading him captiue to the law of ſin. And yet a little before in the ſame chapter hee ſaith, That he did not commit the euil, but ſinne which dwelt in him. The reaſon which hee maketh is, that hee did conſent vnto the law, and woulde haue doone the good, but he did the euil which he hated. To make the matter plaine, thus it is. S. Paul was regenerate, but yet not in full perfection, for the remnant of ſinne did abide in him: that which the part regenerate did, or coueted to doe, or conſented vnto, that he ſaith he did: and that which the corruption which did ſtill remaine in him, forced him for to doe, that hee ſaith he did not, but ſin which dwelled in him. He doth eſteeme himſelfe in the part regenerate, hee counteth the rẽnants of the old man, to be but as excrements, or as a dead carion, which did abide

in him, and anoy him. His delight and desire was vpon the good, he hated the euill, and therefore when he did sinne, because it was against his consent, and against his wil, it was no obedience which he gaue vnto it: he did not therefore serue sinne, neither did sin raigne ouer him, but exercise a certaine tirãny ouer him, which he could not speake of.

Ath. I know not what yée meane, when yée haue saide what yée can, all must bee sinners.

Zelot. Yee may very easily persuade me to beleeue that yee knowe not what I meane: If your fiue wits were fifteene, they woulde helpe nothing in this case. Because ye know not what this meaneth, yee know not what faith in Christ crucified meaneth, yee know not what repentance meaneth, yee can see no difference of sinners: all are sinners say you, and the death of Christ is that whiche saueth, not considering that the death of Christ first killeth those whom it maketh aliue. For this cause men are greatly ouershot oftẽtimes, whẽ they come vnto a sicke man, they thinke if he say, I beleeue Christe died for my sinnes, and shed his blood for me, that then al is aswelas may be. If it were

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Ath. Make your selfe neuer so skilfull, yet yee cannot tell which man God saueth and which he condemneth.

Zelot. It is not the will of God, that we should take vpon vs for to pronounce vpon any man, & to say he is damned: because we must leaue the secrete counsell of God vnto himselfe, who is not bound vnto vs, to giue any account of his doings. But I pray ye let

vs a little consider how this headlesse bolte of yours is shot foorth against true godlynes. Thus you reason, no man can tell who are saued, and who are damned, therfore we are not for to care for triall of our faith & repentãce: & that therfore the rules which are giuẽ in the word of God in these points are nothing worth. Euery man may searche and know in himself, whether he be in good case or not: and we ought euery one for to trie our selues by that which the word teacheth so plentifully. I woulde wish yee to cõsider what the cause is why the greatest multitude goe to destruction: euen because they know not these things, & therfore see not the great danger which they be in, but can boldly beare thẽselues in hãd that they shall doe well enough. Many doe laugh euen in the middest of destruction, I meane that they can sport themselues euen in doing those things which are their bane: and all because they trust to this beliefe which you bragge of. For as on the one side true faith & true repentance, & conuersiõ vnto god, doe salue all the sores & sicknesses of the soule: euen so the cõmon dead faith & cõterfet repẽtãce may be called the diuels

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Ath. Well, I must leaue yee now: ye haue dealt very hardly with me: it were good that you Puritanes shoulde consider your selues, & become better subiects to ye princes.

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Those which consider not them selues are worse then madd men: I told ye before, that I doe not allowe that vice. For your slaun-

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derous accusation, I scorne and defie it: I may boldly take the Lord as a witnesse vnto my conscience, that I doo honour and obey the Prince, and that I doo condemne, hate, and accurse all disobedience vnto the higher powers. But this hath euer bin the readie way which the diuell hath vsed for to bring those which feare God into hatred: by his instrumentes to charge them for to be enemies vnto Princes. Christ was accused of treason, and condemned as an enemy to Ceasar.

Saint Paul diuers times, was thought to be a man whiche did trouble the state. And whosoeuer shall read the auncient stories of the Church, shall finde that this continued still from time to time.

Ath. Are not there many which cout themselues very holy, & yet breake the Queenes lawes?

Zelot. What if it should fall out, as it doth fal out sometimes, that godly Princes commād some thing which is contrary vnto Gods word, should we obey God or mē? It is a very grosse thing to thinke that a mā for obeying God doth disobey his Prince. I would know this allso, whether the brech of euery particular lawe, doth make a man

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In many such like. And because ye speake often of this, who are the Queenes freindes. I saye none but such as feare God: for the wicked & vngodly do prouoke God to anger against the realme, and do procure the destruction of it. God heareth the praiers of such as feare and loue his lawes, when they cry vnto him for their Prince: therfore there can be no more vtter enimies vnto Princes then such as are wicked against God. Now this is a very prepostreous thinge, that you which are rebels against God should beare men in hand that yee be the frendes of the prince, & that such as are godly, they must be counted enemies.

Ath. I can say no more but god blesse and saue her.

Zelot. Amen. I pray God for his mercye sake graũt, that we may be thãkfull for those exceeding great blessings which he hath by her heaped vpon vs, both for body & soule. And the Lord giue vs louing and obedient hearts towads her. And also I beseech God to keep her out of the hand of her enemies, to gouerne her with his blessed spirite, that she may exalt & magnifie his glorious Gospel more & more, and repaire the ruines of his Church: & so glorifie him in this world, that in the world to come she may be glorified for euer. Amen. *FINIS.*